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SELECT POEMS.



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SELECT POEMS

BEING THE

LITERATURE PRESCRIBED FOR THE JUNIOR MATRICULATION AND JUNIOR LEAVING EXAMINATIONS,

1897.

EDITED WITH

INTRODUCTION, NOTES, AND APPENDIX.

BY

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INTRODUCTION.

I.

Poetry: Its Thought and Form.

The Function of Poetry.—Language and literature are the outcome of the desire to communicate thought. Certain assertions, judgments, propositions arise in the mind, and by means of speech or writing we make them known to others. We, for example, accompany a stranger through our own province or county, and by the language of ordinary conversation convey information with regard to its fertility, population, etc. But when the heart swells with pride in our native land, or with the countless emotional associations that link themselves to our native place, or with enthusiasm for the natural beauty of the scene before us, we should feel that these statements, conveyed in ordinary language, do not fully express what is in us. We should wish to express not merely facts—intellectual propositions,—but to give vent to these varied emotions; and for this ordinary language will not suffice. On such an occasion the average man, as his heart burns within him, feels a sense of repression, the need of a form of utterance not at his command; but if, happily, he recalls some suitable passage in poetry, he, in some measure, finds an outlet for his emotion. Much more could he satisfy the yearning for utterance, were he himself a poet, and had he the power to shape the language of poetry to his present needs.

This, then, is the function of poetry, to communicate thought *accompanied by emotion*, to give vent to *feeling*. Poetry is not a mere exhibition of dexterity, like walking the tight-rope, or a superfluous intellectual ornament, like the useless bric-a-brac of a drawing-room; it is something essential to the full expression of the

developed human spirit. That it does "fill a felt need" is shown by the fact that it has arisen independently and spontaneously among every people that has emerged from barbarism. The man who has never felt the need of poetic expression, or found pleasure in poetic literature, may, indeed, be an estimable citizen, a man of great powers—even of genius ; but his nature is limited or stunted, and that, too, in one of its noblest capacities ; such a man cannot be accepted as a type of human perfection. Some men possess in the highest degree the emotional impulse, and have, in addition, the command of language needful to convey it to others ; these are the poets. With the ordinary man the need for poetic expression arises, as indicated in the example above, principally in connection with *personal* feeling. It is a matter of common experience that persons under the influence of youthful passion attempt to express their feelings in poetry, who write verse at no other period of life. But with poets, especially with great poets, the need arises also from the impersonal delight in beauty for its own sake, especially from the desire to create new objects of beauty in the world of imagination.

Its Aim and Form.—Poetry, then, differs from prose in its *aim* and in its *form*. The aim of prose is to convey thought,—those mental conditions which may be expressed in propositions ; prose may also communicate feeling, but it is not an essential of good prose to appeal to the emotions. The aim of poetry, on the other hand, is to convey more complex and vaguer states of mind,—thought permeated with emotion. In *form*, poetry is easily distinguishable from prose. Poetry clothes itself in verse ; its language is metrical, marked by the regular recurrence of stresses, sounds, pauses, which gives the sense of rhythm to the ear. As we read, we anticipate these recurrences ; and, if they are absent, have an unpleasing sensation. In prose, these sound factors are irregular ; the reader has no anticipations with regard to them ; the writer has the fullest liberty in the adjustment of his stresses and pauses. Now, there is, unquestionably, a close connection between this peculiarity of form in poetry, and the peculiarity of its aim. Rhythm in general assists the production of pleasurable feeling ; and certain varieties of rhythm, as is shown both in music and in poetry, are condu-

cive to certain modes of feeling. Every one perceives that the differences in the sound-effect of a stanza of Gray's *Elegy*, and of the song in Tennyson's *Brook*, correspond in some measure to the differences between the subjects treated, and the moods of the poets. This adaptability of sound to sense goes much farther than most readers consciously recognize, although they may *feel* the effect,—although the form may impart the desired stimulus to their emotional temper. Poetical culture greatly increases our susceptibility to these effects. Further, the emotional influence is exercised, not merely by the subject itself, and through the rhythm of the verse, but is conveyed by the character of the imagery, the sort of words employed and the associations connected with them, and by those other numberless minutiae which go to make up what we call the *style* of a poem.

In reading a purely scientific work—a treatise on chemistry or mathematics, for example,—all that we need to regard is the thought. The substance is everything; the expression may, as far as the reader is concerned, be disregarded. The style should be clear, direct,—in short, such as to attract the least possible attention to itself. But in poetry, expression is of the highest importance; he who simply follows the drift of thought, the substantial meaning,—has gone but a little way towards appreciating a poem, or catching that which it is intended to convey. The reader must, in addition, be very sensitive to the style; and that, not merely so as intellectually to perceive stylistic peculiarities, but so as to *feel* the effect of them. Just as in music, it would not suffice that a person should be able to observe and define the relation of each note to the other, to state how many vibrations per second went to the formation of each; he must enjoy the harmony and melody which their combination produces.

Its Theme. — A poem, then, is addressed to the feelings and to the sense of beauty, as well as, and even more than, to the understanding. The proper theme of a poem will therefore be something which has in itself some intrinsic emotional effect :—a touching story or situation in human life, as in *Rosabelle* or *The Outlaw*; a beautiful external object or scene,

as in Byron's stanzas on the Falls of Terni ; a feeling, or emotional mood, as in the *Ode to a Nightingale* ; an object or thought which has emotional associations, as in Shelley's *Skylark*, or in *The Inner Vision*. If a poet selects a theme which has no emotional associations, or these of a meagre or feeble character, he may still manage to attain the aim of poetry by means of beauty of form,—the rhythm of his verse, the charm of his imagery, the aptness of his expression—all of which give the emotion of pleasure. Pope's *Essay on Criticism* is an example of such success in the treatment of a purely intellectual and unemotional theme,—the laws of good writing.

The Importance, in Poetry, of Form or Expression.—It must be noted that in any case the success of the poet depends mainly on his treatment. The Falls of Terni may be a fit subject for a poem, but every poem on that subject will not therefore please. The success depends, firstly, on a proper selection of the infinite details afforded by the actual scene, which, in turn, depends upon the insight of genius ; and secondly, on the expression of these details in such words, imagery and rhythm, as will both please in themselves, and summon to the mind with extraordinary vividness, the requisite pictures and feelings. Poetry, then, is largely a matter of form and expression. It is not profundity or novelty of thought that keeps the works of Herrick, and Pope, and Keats alive, while the works of Chapman, and Cowley, and Southey have sunk into comparative oblivion. On the other hand, we cannot assent to the exaggerated doctrine of "art for art's sake,"—that technical excellence is all, and matter nothing. Poetry which gives utterance to what is trivial, or false, or unwholesome, is, in so far, inferior to poetry which embodies profound and universal truth, lofty thought and feeling, or accurate delineations of human life and character. Form and thought are, indeed, considered apart for purposes of convenience ; but they cannot in reality be separated. Expression must be the expression of something ; thought is not thought till it takes form in the mind. At any rate, while the substantial drift of a poem might be conveyed otherwise,—in prose, for example,—the emotional accompaniment can be

accurately rendered in no other way than that which the poet adopts. Change stanza, imagery, vocabulary, and you introduce a new emotional atmosphere. It may possibly be as good; in any case, it is different. The student should therefore rid himself of the idea that form is a trivial thing in poetry; that prose might adequately express what is embodied in a poem; that the poet might render his meaning better in an explanatory note appended to a passage; that Shakespeare could have made *Hamlet*, or Browning have made *Sordello*, clear and satisfactory in prose. The more perfect and the higher is poetry, the more inseparably and organically are thought and form interwoven.

Poetry Concrete.—Connected with the emotional quality of poetry is its concreteness. Emotion links itself naturally with individual persons, things, and experiences, rather than with abstract ideas, or general conceptions. Science is opposed to poetry in that it has to do with general classes, and general assertions. Individuals are too numerous for science to deal with them separately; there is not a science of each individual tree, but of classes of trees which resemble one another in the possession of certain abstract qualities. Science aims at general statements, *i.e.*, at statements which are true of a number of individuals—of a class. It busies itself, indeed, in considering individual objects, and individual phenomena; but only with the aim of rising from them to a statement which shall be true of several objects, *i.e.*, which shall be general. The scientific mind *analyses* individual objects and events in order to get at common qualities, and at statements which shall hold true of many things. The man of poetic mind is interested in the individual for its own sake, and has no particular skill analysing that individual into abstract pieces; he prefers to let the individual affect him, in its unity and completeness, and to reproduce it as a *whole*. When he has observed some abstract or general truth, or is interested in such, he prefers to communicate this by embodying it in a typical instance. Shakespeare was doubtless interested in the effects of ambition upon a weak moral nature, and in the tendencies which were evolved in the character of the Jews by their peculiar circumstances;

but he does not give us a disquisition upon these points—a series of general statements about Jews or ambitious people. He embodies his ideas in the typical cases of Shylock and Macbeth. By adopting this method, he gains the advantage of touching our feelings, of bringing home the truth of his embodiment to our hearts in a degree to which he could never have attained by any reasoned systematic treatise. A poet's attention is fixed upon the individual; and he represents individual things or persons in his poetry, not indeed just as he has observed them, but so as to embody some conception or feeling existing in his own mind. When he beholds a beautiful landscape, he is not chiefly impelled to ask how it came into existence, what geologic forces shaped its outlines, what peculiarities of soil or situation account for the trees which bedeck it. Such questions are the outcome of the scientific tendency. Upon the artistic mind the chief effect of the landscape is to produce some emotional impression,—of grandeur, repose, beauty, etc. And this is what the artist seeks to reproduce in a picture or a poem. It is impossible, even were it desirable, to convey the infinite details that belong to the actual scene. The artist selects those which serve to convey the impression the scene makes upon him; he excludes all incongruities—and in every actual scene there will be such; he intensifies what makes for his purpose; and with the same view, probably introduces what does not exist in the original. In short, he *idealizes*. He originates a new concrete which typifies some general conception, and conveys some emotion to the spectator or reader.

Beauty and Perfection of Poetry in Details.—As the *whole* which the poet creates is concrete, and beautiful, and fitted to produce a given emotional effect upon the reader; so, in the best poetry, will each *part* of that whole, as far as possible, in itself give a concrete image, and a sense of beauty and pleasure. This independence and interest of the parts is not required in prose; any part, there, is amply justified if it contributes to the whole outcome. But the best poetry not only charms as a whole; but, further, its parts are such that we linger over them with

delight. We do not hurry through them, as we hurry through some novels with well-constructed story, but otherwise barren,—eager only to catch enough as we go, to carry us to the end. Of course, every poem does not attain perfection; and many beautiful poems have defective parts,—not merely bad rhymes, unmusical combinations of sounds, etc., but prosaic passages and phrases, which, although they would be quite unobjectionable in prose, are dead-weights in poetry; because, although they may be necessary for the development and comprehension of the whole poem, they are not beautiful and attractive in themselves. In a long work, an epic for example,—such parts are to some extent unavoidable. But the skilful poet often manages to carry the reader over prosaic details by the charm of workmanship,—the flow and music of the verse. Every true lover of poetry, for example, finds pleasure in the sonorous roll of lines from *Paradise Lost* which are little more than lists of proper names.

Poetic Imagery.—In lending to his verse beauty of detail, the poet makes use of other devices besides those of sound and metre:—for example, the introduction, through the use of imagery, of objects and ideas beautiful and pleasing in themselves. So in *Enoch Arden*, Tennyson being under the necessity of referring to the somewhat prosaic fact of the appearance of the miller in his mill, relieves the passage by the insertion of a simile suggesting a beautiful object with poetic associations.

Him, like the working bee in blossom dust,
Blanch'd with his mill, they found.

Such introduction of similes, not needful in any way for the explanation of the writer's meaning, is a regular practice in poetry, though not admissible in prose, where a simile is only justifiable through affording clearness to the thought. In poetry also, it is more satisfactory that a comparison should not be merely ornamental, but contribute in some way to the understanding of the subject upon which the poet is engaged. The main object of the prose comparison is intellectual clearness, of

the poetical comparison emotional suggestiveness. One of Wordsworth's charming little poems opens with the following two stanzas :—

She dwelt among the untrodden ways
Beside the springs of Dove,
A Maid whom there were none to praise
And very few to love ;

A violet by a mossy stone
Half hidden from the eye !
Fair as a star, when only one
Is shining in the sky.

The second of the above stanzas virtually contains two similes, suggesting things beautiful and poetical in themselves ; but that is not all,—they are not mere idle ornaments. The comparisons with the half hidden violet and the lonely star serve to convey, in the most vivid and beautiful way, the sort of impression which Lucy made upon the poet by her beauty, modesty, grace, and seclusion. The stanza illustrates admirably the peculiarity of the poetic, as distinguished from the scientific, method. The poet does not analyse his feeling, does not determine exactly what combination of qualities in the maiden excited this feeling in him ; and, consequently, does not enumerate them for his readers. That might be more clear and accurate, as far as it could go, but it would not be so complete, suggestive and effective. Instead of analysing his impression, and giving it to us in pieces, the poet seeks for some concrete objects that may image this feeling in its completeness. The violet and the star have endless qualities ; they present aspects and associations which have analogies with the effects produced by Lucy's character and presence ; these suggest themselves, perhaps vaguely, and exercise their influence upon the reader. The results of such concrete suggestion are vague, but infinite. The results of analysis are definite and exhaustible.

Poetic Vocabulary.—As the concreteness, and beauty, and emotional influence of poetry should be present in the smallest parts as well as in a whole poem, so even single words employed by the poet should, if pos-

sible, suggest beautiful images, and have some hold upon the feelings. That concreteness is realized in practice, may be shown by a glance at a page of Shakespeare's, or Milton's, or Tennyson's poetry, placed side by side with a page from Hooker's *Ecclesiastical Polity*, or Hume's *Essays*, or Mill's *Logic*. The diction of poetry approaches in some respects more closely the diction of real life than does the diction of prose literature, especially prose of an expository nature. This is because both poetry and the ordinary talk of people deal mainly with concrete objects; expository literature, with abstractions and general terms. But there is another reason why the dictions of real life and of poetry should approximate; and that is because of the power of association which words possess. This associative influence may be exemplified in the case of names applied to disgusting sensations. These names become so permeated with disagreeable associations as in time to grow positively repulsive; and hence are shunned in ordinary society. Society does not stop speaking of the *thing*, but using the *word*. So in the Authorized Version, Martha is represented as saying that the dead body of her brother Lazarus "stinketh," a word now so thoroughly imbued with disagreeable associations that it would not by a modern writer be put into the mouth of a speaker in similar circumstances. We should perhaps employ a periphrasis containing the words *smell* or *odour*; these words, if we go on using them in this way, will in time come to be as repulsive as the other. Words, then, are permeated with associations; and associations which influence the emotions strongly, naturally belong most of all to words that are commonly used in actual life,—not to words reserved mainly for the dignified historian or scientist. Words like *home*, *love*, *mother*, *death*, are bound up with the deepest feelings of life, and are appropriate to poetry; while *domicile*, *demise*, *affinity* have no such emotional associations. On another side, however, the diction of poetry is more remote from the diction of real life than is that of scientific prose. The terms of science or of prose literature *may* enter into the vocabulary of conversation, but there are a large number of words used exclusively in poetry,—words like *bourne*, *steed*, *glaiive*, *upclomb*, *sware*, *adown*. Through this very fact of having always been found in con-

nection with poetry, they convey a poetic flavour, and suggest aesthetic enjoyment ; hence are valuable for the poet's purposes. Some of these words even carry with them a suggestion of some particular classic passage in which they are used ; as, for example, the word *bourne* inevitably brings with it associations from the famous soliloquy of Hamlet ; hence is very appropriately used by Tennyson in *Crossing the Bar*. A poet like Keats whose power depends chiefly upon his perception of beauty, is apt to have recourse to this purely poetic diction ; while Wordsworth who bases his poetry "on simple truth," naturally has recourse to the vocabulary which is common to poetry and actual life.

Beauty of Sound.—Considerations of meaning and association apart, the poet selects such words, and especially such combinations of words, as not only meet the requirements of his verse,—stress, rhyme, etc., but also afford combinations of sounds pleasing to the ear,—alternations of vowels and consonants, successions of related or contrasted vowel sounds, etc. Of these pleasing sequences, the most obvious is *Alliteration* ; but there are less conspicuous and more effective devices to increase the beauty of mere sound. Note, for example, in addition to the effective alliteration, the selection of related consonantal sounds, in the following from Shakespeare :

Let me not to the marriage of true minds
Admit impediments.

Onomatopœia is another familiar device, and goes beyond such obvious adaptations of sound to sense as

Grate on their scrannel pipes of wretched straw

to more subtle fitnesses, as in

Music that gentlier on the spirit lies
Than tired eyelids upon tired eyes.

or,

On one side lay the ocean, and on one
Lay a great water, and the moon was full.

In brief, the material with which the poet works is sound, as the

material with which the painter works is colour. As the latter strives to put into his picture beautiful colours, and especially harmonious combinations of colours, so does the poet seek for his verses pleasing sounds and pleasing sequences of sound.

It may be objected that such devices as these are trivial ; and trivial they undoubtedly are, if to attain them the poet sacrifices his thought in the smallest degree. How offensive it is, when a writer uses a word that is manifestly not, as far as signification goes, the best word, merely because it suits his rhyme or fills up the number of syllables in the verse ; much more if it merely produces an alliteration, or some other minor sound-effect ! But the peculiarity of the great poet is that the verse rhythm, and these minor sound beauties seem to come unsought and inevitably, without the slightest sacrifice of sense. The words are the best words in the best places, with the harmonious sound-combinations to boot. In the line and a half quoted above from a sonnet of Shakespeare's, not a word could be improved as regards the expression of the idea, yet how perfect is the sound flow ! So it is in all the finest passages of our greatest poets—of Shakespeare, and Milton, and Wordsworth ; they are the absolute perfection of expression from the point of view both of sense and sound.

II.

The Study of Poetry.

The Spirit of the True Student.—Poetry, then, appeals to the feelings, to the sense of beauty, to the ear, as well as to the intellect ; whereas most of the other studies of the school curriculum are primarily and almost wholly addressed to the intellect. For this reason, it is even more important in the case of poetry, than of other subjects, that it should be approached in the proper spirit. Certainly, here as well as elsewhere, the student whose only aim is to pass an examination will never attain to the full and most valuable results of poetic study. The aim of the learner should be to comprehend and enjoy fully the

thought and spirit of these great men, who in their poems have left the record of their highest thoughts and experiences. The less considerations with regard to examinations enter the mind,—except in so far as these considerations lead to greater diligence and accuracy,—the better will it be for the purposes of genuine education. It remains ever true that what “a man soweth, that shall he also reap.” The student who diligently pursues his work with the purpose of passing the examination merely, will doubtless attain his end, and such other external results as success brings. But these will be his only reward. The student who as diligently strives to enter into the true spirit of poetry, may perhaps not stand as high on the lists, but he will attain, in addition to external results, a great and permanent return,—the development of mental and spiritual power, the widening of his intellectual horizon, the permanent possession of an ever present and easily accessible source of the loftiest stimulus and highest enjoyment.

Examinations apart, there is another very essential point in regard to the spirit in which we enter upon the study of literature. It is almost inevitable that to the immature mind making a first serious acquaintance with poetry, much should at first seem trivial, meaningless, or absurd. It is unfortunate, if the beginner in a spirit begotten of ignorance and conceit—a temper widely prevalent—should fortify himself in his incompetence, and pronounce the masterpieces of literature nonsensical and useless, because he fails to grasp their power and beauty. Let him reflect that in these things which he despises, the greatest minds—it may be of generations—have found a keen delight and a stimulus for their highest faculties. It will at once be apparent to him that the defect lies, not in the things read, but in the reader. Such a reader may well lay to heart the need that exists in his case for growth and development. Happily such obtuseness to the excellence of poetry is usually, in the main, due to immaturity, lack of experience, and of culture; and the novice may confidently anticipate that if he sets himself to the study of our great writers with diligence, and in the proper spirit, this obtuseness will gradually vanish. No less to be avoided is the opposed spirit of cant and pretence, which professes admiration and enjoyment, when no admiration

or enjoyment is really felt. If the young student finds Shakespeare's plays dull and tiresome, and Wordsworth's *Tintern Abbey* meaningless, this is neither unnatural nor disgraceful; let him not profess to find them profound and delightful. Let him honestly confess the fact to himself and others; but let him reflect that only time and labour can afford him the smallest right to set up his judgment against the verdict of "those who know."

There are no fixed and admitted principles of literary art by mastering which we are enabled to judge surely and correctly. The only thing that should give any one confidence in his own judgment, or the right to express any sort of authoritative opinion to others, is the fact that he does appreciate some portion of the literature which the world pronounces *classical*. The more extensive and varied is this portion which he appreciates, the more likely is his judgment to be of worth. If his knowledge and enjoyment extend beyond the limits of his mother-tongue to the literature of other countries and remote times, so much the better. But, in any case, as experience has repeatedly shown, the judgment of any individual—however broad and varied is his knowledge and power—will have its limitations. Certain kinds of poetry will be less congenial to him than others; and in these kinds more especially he will acknowledge his limitations. Especially in the sphere of new literature of a strikingly original character, will the best trained judgment be liable to error. If a certain amount of diffidence and reserve is desirable in the ripest critics, it need scarcely be said that the proper spirit for the beginner is one of modesty and humility. Such a state of mind may well be cultivated for other reasons than those connected with literary culture. And it is an excellent quality of literature as a subject for school-study, that it affords a complement and corrective to what is, in its own place and limits, the very proper spirit of independence and scepticism developed by the scientific subjects and educational methods of these latter days. In literature, at least, the learner must bow to authority, be receptive and docile. He should come before the masterpieces of literature with open mind, eager to learn, more intent on beauties than defects, trying to see and feel what the best

judges have seen and felt. The criticism and instruction of others is needful to tell the inexperienced what to seek, and where to look. But criticism and instruction are useless, unless the learner sees with his own eyes what has been pointed out, and feels for himself the beauty and charm of which others tell him.

Method of Studying a Poem.—Hard and fast general methods are useful as suggestions and guides ; but they should not be applied in a wooden fashion. All good method is elastic and organic, adapting itself to the particular case and circumstances. In studying a poem the natural method can be defined neither as being purely a proceeding from the details to the general purport, nor from the general purport to the details, but as a proceeding from the vague to the clear and accurate. The meaning of certain details will probably not be clear until we understand the general drift ; nor, of course, can we understand fully the general drift until we have mastered the details. As a rule, we tentatively read a poem over until we catch to some extent the general scope. We then proceed to examine how each part, each sentence and epithet, contributes to this main result. It will almost inevitably happen that this more careful study of details will serve to make clearer, or to modify, our conception of the general idea. The result attained will, therefore, arise from a gradual adjustment of our conception of the significance of the whole to the significance of the parts, and *vice versa*. In the best poetry, every word will have its effect and its reason,—no redundant epithet will be found. That, at least, is a good general principle to accept in our studies, although it does not by any means always hold, of the whole body of poetry.

It is manifest that there will be a certain amount of painful effort in making a first acquaintance with a great work of art. The mind must be extremely active and tense. No poem of the highest order yields its full secret on the first perusal, perhaps not on the twentieth. It contains a wealth of thought and suggestion condensed in little space ; time and pains are required to catch them, to connect and adjust the various impressions. Only after repeated readings does each detail fall into its

proper place, and arise in consciousness without effort and with just the proper amount of prominence. But it is not until this stage is reached that the flow of feeling and enjoyment is uninterrupted. Most prose works are exhaustible ; we master all that they contain on the first, or second, or third reading. But the best poetry is not thus exhaustible. Its significance increases with familiarity. It grows a nucleus of pleasant associations ; the delight we have had in it in the past serves to heighten our pleasure at the present ; it becomes a talisman to awaken a higher and happier mood. Indeed, for the cultivation of all artistic taste, the most important instrument is familiarity with the best examples of that art. To develop our taste for music, we must hear good music ;—for painting, we must see good pictures ; for literature, we must read good books.

Further, as poetry is addressed to the ear, charms by its sound, as well as its sense, the true lover of poetry naturally reads much aloud to himself. Even when the voice is silent, the sounds of former readings are echoing in his ear. Besides, it is true that after the more obvious difficulties of a poem have been overcome, one of the best instruments for completing the work of interpretation is good reading. This brings out the finer shades of meaning and connection, addresses the sense of pleasure in the ear, and kindles the fitting emotion through the associations of tone. It may be noted, in this connection, that, as one must not only understand, but also *feel* poetry, the class-room and the teacher are here specially helpful. For emotion is communicated subtly by personal presence ; as we note in the effects of the spoken word of the orator, and in the waves of feeling that pass over men when gathered together. The stimulus of the teacher's appreciation, and even of the silent appreciation of a majority of the class, will set in motion the lagging perceptions of the minority. But in such reading of poetry as we speak of here, there must be nothing of the theatrical,—nothing of display. The reader should not obtrude himself ; he should be a mere medium between the author and the listener. He should read so as to bring out the connection of thought ; and as, in poetry, the connection is often remote, the thought condensed, the expression suggestive and delightful

in itself, he should read very slowly. The tone should be sympathetic, and vary with the sense, in order to stimulate the proper feeling in the auditor, and to prevent the soporific effect of monotony. But this expression of feeling in the voice should be strictly moderated, and not be such as to centre attention upon itself. Finally—and this is a point often disregarded among professional readers,—the rhythm of the verse should be distinctly made apparent. An approach to sing-song is better than the style of reading which neglects to enforce the rhymes, to indicate the ends of the lines,—which, indeed, turns poetry into prose. It is noteworthy in this connection that all the poets of whose reading aloud we hear anything,—Tennyson, and Scott, and Wordsworth, and Coleridge,—all emphasized rhythm, even to the point of turning their reading into a sort of chant.

The Wider Study of Poetry.—The study of poetry in its fullest extent includes a great deal besides the appreciation of individual poems. But that appreciation of the individual poem—that comprehension of its thought, that catching of its emotional tone, that enjoyment of the beauty of its form and style, of which we have been speaking, is the main end for students at the stage for which these Selections are designed. The wider aspects of poetry-study,—the perception of the differences between the works of various poets, of the way in which each man's work is shaped by, and gives expression to, his life and character, and how too it is influenced by, and gives expression to, the thought of the time—such wider considerations are for more mature readers with a wider range of knowledge. At our earlier stage they are useful only so far as some knowledge of such matters serve to increase the interest and significance of individual poems. Contrast is an almost essential instrument in acquiring a true perception of things; and beginners may advantageously note the more obvious differences in the style of various writers, and in their treatment of similar themes. The range of these Selections affords material for such work. Again, no one can be interested in the writings of a man without feeling a reflected curiosity in regard to the man himself; and

the most meagre acquaintance with the life and character of a writer will greatly help in the study of his works. But all these things are, at this stage, but helps, and not ends in themselves. The novice in poetry has made a greater step forward, if he has learned really to enjoy a single fine poem, than if he has filled his mind with facts about a dozen poets, and has learned by rote the peculiarities of their thought and style.

III.

The Relations of Poetic Thought and Form as Exemplified in the Sonnet.

The Sonnet.—There is a poetic form which on account of its small compass, combined with great elaboration, affords an admirable study for the connection of form and thought in poetry, namely: the Sonnet. We may the more properly use this species to exemplify the connection because several sonnets occur in these Selections.

Its form.—It will be convenient, first of all, to enumerate the main external characteristics of the sonnet in English. It is a poem consisting of fourteen pentameter lines, and these lines are, by means of rhyme, combined in a certain fixed way. The first four lines form a quatrain (*i.e.*, a four-lined stanza), with the first and last lines rhyming, and also the second and third. The next four lines also form a quatrain of exactly the same structure; and these two quatrains are united by having a common rhyme,—that, namely, of the first and fourth lines. The rhyme-scheme may therefore be represented as *a b b a a c c a*.* The eight lines being thus linked together are felt as a whole, and are called the *octave*. The remaining six lines, in a regular sonnet, are not connected by rhyme with the octave, but rhyme together in such a way as also to be felt as belonging to one another; they are

* English poets take great liberties with the form, and in some sonnets the arrangement of rhymes is different; but the order given above is the accepted one, and is also the most usual and, other things being equal, the most effective.

called the *sestette*. The *sestette* contains three, or two, different rhymes ; the arrangement of the rhymes is left very free, provided only the result be that the *sestette* is felt as forming a metrical whole. So, for example, with two rhymes a common arrangement is de de de ; or with three rhymes def def ; but the arrangement de de ff is not held to be a good one in the regular sonnet ; because the final couplet is naturally felt as standing apart from the rest, and the sonnet loses its characteristic effect. In the regular form here described a great many beautiful poems have been written, not merely in English, but in other European languages, especially in Italian, where the sonnet originated.

Advantages of the Form.—It may be asked : Why should the poet submit himself to all these artificial restrictions ? Why this arrangement of rhymes ? Why should not the poem consist of 12 or 15, or 16 lines ? We may answer, first of all, that successful poems *have* been written in the compass of 12, or of 16 lines, and also that poems of fourteen lines have been written with other rhyme schemes ; but, since, as a fact, the sonnet has been employed with great frequency and effect by a large number of poets, there is doubtless some special excellence in the form, though the reason of it may escape our analysis. Countless experiments have been made in poetic forms, many of these have perished, or have been but little used ; but the sonnet, originated in Italy in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, by its continued use and wide distribution proves itself a “survival of the fittest.” And the fitness must lie either in some intrinsic beauty of sound, dependent on such an arrangement of lines, or in some appropriateness of the form to the expression of poetic thought ; or, more probably, in both. In like manner, in English poetry the most frequent line is the pentameter ; evidently because it is pleasing to the ear, and for general purposes neither too short nor too long. But why it pleases, and why it is neither too short nor too long might be difficult to explain.

Let us examine the sonnet, then, with the purpose of discovering any peculiarities which may account for its vogue. In the first place, the use of a form at once fixed and elaborate, gives pleasure

to the reader from the sense of difficulties easily and gracefully overcome. The restrictions may, indeed, seem to us meaningless ; but if the poet can still disport himself gracefully amidst them, like the tight-rope performer blindfolded and carrying a burden on his back, we cannot but experience a certain satisfaction and admiration. And this sort of pleasure,—the pleasure of seeing thought aptly and easily expressed notwithstanding the restrictions of verse,—is present in all our enjoyment of poetry. But it is a pleasure of an inferior and exhaustible character. There must be something beyond mere difficulties overcome to account either for the enjoyment of poetry in general, or the popularity of the sonnet in particular.

In the second place, then, just as poetry by its sound qualities, its rhythm, rhyme, etc., gives pleasure to the ear—a pleasure apart from the sense that is conveyed to the mind ; so undoubtedly there is a certain dignified and sonorous music attained by the arrangement of lines we find in the sonnet. This music is further characterized by giving to the ear a sense of flow and ebb, in consequence of the two parts (octave and sestet) into which the poem is divided, and of the peculiar effect of the rhyme arrangement in each. Here, as in every popular form of stanza, there is a music inherent in the form ; and this music must adapt the form to the expression of some more or less limited sphere of thought or feeling. We easily recognize a certain liveliness and rapidity in the movement of the octosyllabic couplet, so frequently employed in Scott's narrative poems,—a slow dignity in the elegiac stanza of Gray's elegy,—a magnificent and prolonged periodic roll in the Spenserian stanza. So the sonnet has an easily perceptible music, and the character of that music will suit it for certain purposes. This brings us to the third and most important reason for the prevalence of the sonnet form,—its adaptability to the expression of certain kinds of thought.

Relation between Form and Thought in the Sonnet.—In the first place the sonnet, from the point of view of form, is, as compared with other poems, markedly a whole made up of parts. It has shape, as a Greek pillar, with its base shaft and capital, has shape. There is no

reason in *form* why a poem written in couplets or stanzas should not end at any stanza, at the twelfth line, for example, rather than the sixteenth. In form, it is a mere repetition of similar parts; and, accordingly, it often happens that lyrics written in quatrains have no particular beginning or end; the poet keeps circling around some central feeling or thought, there is no marked development. On the contrary, the form of the sonnet, as well as its music with the flow and ebb, manifestly lends itself to developed thought—to the expression of ideas which start somewhere and end in some conclusion. Such thought is, other things being equal, more interesting and artistic, than thought which makes no progress; just as a story with developed plot is more artistic and interesting than a series of loosely connected scenes. The sonnet therefore is, by its form, suited to the expression of some poetic conception which can be briefly expressed and yet is progressive,—has unity, and development, a beginning, middle, and conclusion. As the form falls into two parts, so also will the thought. The octave will contain the introduction, the circumstances, etc., which give rise to, or serve to explain, the main idea or feeling. The sestet will give expression to this main idea; and the character of the thought of the concluding lines of the sestet will be such as to indicate that the poem is closing. As the octave consists of two parts, so often will the thought of the introduction divide itself into two parts or stages. Again, the reader cannot but feel that the form of the sonnet is very elaborate, and somewhat rigid. So a sonnet is not fitted to express a strong gush of emotion, or intensity of feeling—such as we often find in the ordinary lyric. Burns' songs forced into sonnet-form would quite lose their characteristic flavour of spontaneity, passion, or humour. In the sonnet, too, the movements of line and stanza are slow and dignified. Hence the sonnet is specially adapted to the expression of thoughtful, meditative moods. "When an emotion," says Theodore Watts, very admirably, "is either too deeply charged with thought, or too much adulterated with fancy, to pass spontaneously into the movements of a pure lyric" it is appropriately "embodied in the single metrical flow and return" of a sonnet. As the form of this species of poem compels

brevity and suggests premeditation and effort ; so we expect weight and condensation of thought, and exquisiteness of diction. And as it is a developed whole and, like a tragedy, has a certain culmination, we expect this condensation and weight and this perfection of workmanship, more especially in the sestet. If, on the other hand, there is no correspondence between thought and form in the sonnet, no appropriateness in the music, the whole thing seems a useless piece of artificiality, little more interesting than an acrostic.

The Shakespearian Sonnet.—We have given the broad principles of sonnet construction as borrowed from the Italian ; but English writers, as already indicated, have treated the form at times very freely, and departed even from these more general rules. The study of any collection of sonnets by various writers, such as those of Main, Hall Caine, and Sharp, will convince the student of the superiority of this regular, or Petrarchan, type. The closer the poet can keep to the classical form *without sacrificing the thought*, the more effective will be the poem. But there is one variant from the regular form which has taken its place beside the other as extraordinarily effective for certain purposes—the variant which was employed by Shakespeare. These forms (the Petrarchan and Shakespearian) says Watts, “have become so vital and dominant that any departure from these two arrangements, even though the results be such a magnificent poem as Shelley’s *Ozymandias*, disappoints the expectation, baffles the ear, and brings with it the sense of the fragmentary and inchoate.”

The variant developed by Elizabethan writers and adopted by Shakespeare is so marked a deviation from the original as almost to constitute a different species of poem. Its structure is simple ; it consists of three quatrains, each consisting of lines rhyming alternately, followed by a couplet. The rhyme scheme is, therefore, a b a b, c d c d, e f e f, g g. Looking at the form of this poem, one might either say it consisted either of four, or of two, parts. In practice, the difference between the three quatrains on the one hand, and the couplet on the other is so conspicuous that the poem seems naturally to fall rather into these two parts.

The first twelve lines are introductory ; within these twelve lines the thought may or may not be progressive ; the last two lines contain the gist of the thought, the application or outcome of what has been given in the quatrains ; they have the effect of climax or epigram. It very often happens, however, that the first eight lines are introductory, as in the regular sonnet ; the next four develop the thought towards the conclusion ; while the couplet drops in the keystone, as it were, which completes and holds together the whole. Regular sonnets have been compared, in their movement, to the rise and fall of a billow, to “a rocket ascending in the air, breaking into light, and falling in a soft shower of brightness.” The Shakespearian sonnet, on the other hand, has been likened to a “red-hot bar being moulded upon a forge till—in the closing couplet—it receives the final clinching blow from a heavy hammer.”

Examples.—The following is by Shakespeare :

Full many a glorious morning have I seen
 Flatter the mountain tops with sovereign eye,
 Kissing with golden face the meadows green,
 Gilding pale streams with heavenly alchemy ;
 Anon permit the basest clouds to ride
 With ugly rack on his celestial face,
 And from the forlorn world his visage hide,
 Stealing unseen to west with this disgrace :
 Even so my sun one early morn did shine,
 With all-triumphant splendour on my brow,
 But, out alack ! he was but one hour mine,
 The region cloud hath masked him from me now.
 Yet him for this my love no whit Jisdaineth ;
 Suns of the world may stain when heaven's sun staineth.

The first eight lines contain the introductory matter necessary for perceiving the force of the main idea ; the next four lines bring the natural phenomenon, described in lines 1-8, into relation with an incident of the poet's experience which gives birth to the sonnet ; the couplet contains the thought or feeling for the sake of which the poem was written.

Beside this we may place two beautiful sonnets of Milton which follow the Petrarchan model. The second of these, however, exhibits a common peculiarity of Milton's sonnets: the overflow of sense not only from line to line, and quatrain to quatrain, but also from octave to sestet. The second sonnet is in Milton's grandest style; the first in a more familiar vein; and to this the graceful falling away of melody and meaning at the close seems exquisitely appropriate.

TO THE LADY MARGARET LEY.

Daughter to that good Earl, once President
Of England's Council and her Treasury,
Who lived on both unstain'd with gold or fee,
And left them both, more in himself content,
Till the sad breaking of that Parliament
Broke him, as that dishonest victory
At Chaeroneia, fatal to liberty,
Kill'd with report that old man eloquent;—
Though later born than to have known the days
Wherein your father flourish'd, yet by you,
Madam, methinks I see him living yet;
So well your words his noble virtues praise,
That all both judge you to relate them true.
And to possess them, honour'd Margaret.

ON HIS BLINDNESS.

When I consider how my light is spent
Ere half my days, in this dark world and wide,
And that one talent which is death to hide
Lodged with me useless, though my soul more bent
To serve therewith my Maker, and present
My true account, lest He returning chide,—
Doth God exact day-labour, light denied?
I fondly ask:—But Patience, to prevent
That murmur, soon replies; God doth not need
Either man's work or His own gifts: who best
Bear His mild yoke, they serve Him best: His state
Is kingly, thousands at His bidding speed
And post o'er land and ocean without rest:—
They also serve who only stand and wait.

POEMS.

GOLDSMITH.

THE TRAVELLER ;

OR,

A PROSPECT OF SOCIETY.

Remote, unfriended, melancholy, slow,
Or by the lazy Scheldt or wandering Po ;
Or onward, where the rude Carinthian boor
Against the houseless stranger shuts the door ;
Or where Campania's plain forsaken lies, 5

A weary waste expanding to the skies ;
Where'er I roam, whatever realms to see,
My heart untravell'd fondly turns to thee ;
Still to my brother turns, with ceaseless pain,
And drags at each remove a lengthening chain. 10

Eternal blessings crown my earliest friend,
And round his dwelling guardian saints attend :
Blest be that spot where cheerful guests retire
To pause from toil, and trim their ev'ning fire :
Blest that abode where want and pain repair, 15

And every stranger finds a ready chair :
Blest be those feasts, with simple plenty crown'd,
Where all the ruddy family around
Laugh at the jests or pranks that never fail,
Or sigh with pity at some mournful tale, 20
Or press the bashful stranger to his food,
And learn the luxury of doing good.

But me, not destin'd such delights to share,
My prime of life in wand'ring spent and care,
Impell'd, with steps unceasing, to pursue 25

Some fleeting good, that mocks me with the view ;
That, like the circle bounding earth and skies,
Allures from far, yet, as I follow, flies ;
My fortune leads to traverse realms alone,
And find no spot of all the world my own. 30

E'en now, where Alpine solitudes ascend,
I sit me down a pensive hour to spend ;
And plac'd on high above the storm's career,
Look downward where a hundred realms appear ;
Lakes, forests, cities, plains extending wide, 35
The pomp of kings, the shepherd's humbler pride.

When thus Creation's charms around combine,
Amidst the store should thankless pride repine ?
Say, should the philosophic mind disdain
That good which makes each humbler bosom vain ? 40
Let school-taught pride dissemble all it can,
These little things are great to little man ;
And wiser he, whose sympathetic mind
Exults in all the good of all mankind.
Ye glitt'ring towns, with wealth and splendour crown'd ; 45
Ye fields, where summer spreads profusion round ;
Ye lakes, whose vessels catch the busy gale ;
Ye bending swains, that dress the flow'ry vale ;
For me your tributary stores combine :
Creation's heir, the world, the world is mine ! 50

As some lone miser visiting his store,
Bends at his treasure, counts, re-counts it o'er ;
Hoards after hoards his rising raptures fill,
Yet still he sighs, for hoards are wanting still ;
Thus to my breast alternate passions rise, 55
Pleas'd with each good that Heaven to man supplies :
Yet oft a sigh prevails, and sorrows fall,
To see the hoard of human bliss so small ;
And oft I wish amidst the scene to find

Some spot to real happiness consign'd, 60
Where my worn soul, each wand'ring hope at rest,
May gather bliss to see my fellows blest.

But where to find that happiest spot below
Who can direct, when all pretend to know?
The shudd'ring tenant of the frigid zone 65
Boldly proclaims that happiest spot his own ;
Extols the treasures of his stormy seas,
And his long nights of revelry and ease :
The naked negro, panting at the line,
Boasts of his golden sands and palmy wine, 70
Basks in the glare, or stems the tepid wave,
And thanks his gods for all the good they gave.
Such is the patriot's boast where'er we roam,
His first, best country ever is at home.
And yet, perhaps, if countries we compare, 75
And estimate the blessings which they share,
Though patriots flatter, still shall wisdom find
An equal portion dealt to all mankind ;
As different good, by Art or Nature given,
To different nations makes their blessings even. 80

Nature, a mother kind alike to all,
Still grants her bliss at Labour's earnest call :
With food as well the peasant is supplied
On Idra's cliffs as Arno's shelvy side ;
And though the rocky-crested summits frown, 85
These rocks by custom turn to beds of down.
From Art more various are the blessings sent,—
Wealth, commerce, honour, liberty, content.
Yet these each other's powers so strong contest,
That either seems destructive of the rest. 90
Where wealth and freedom reign, contentment fails,
And honour sinks where commerce long prevails.
Hence every state, to one lov'd blessing prone,

Conforms and models life to that alone.
Each to the favourite happiness attends, 95
And spurns the plan that aims at other ends :
Till carried to excess in each domain,
This favourite good begets peculiar pain.

But let us try these truths with closer eyes,
And trace them through the prospect as it lies : 100
Here for a while my proper cares resign'd,
Here let me sit in sorrow for mankind ;
Like yon neglected shrub at random cast,
That shades the steep, and sighs at every blast.

Far to the right, where Appennine ascends, 105
Bright as the summer, Italy extends :
Its uplands sloping deck the mountain's side,
Woods over woods in gay theatric pride ;
While oft some temple's mould'ring tops between
With venerable grandeur mark the scene. 110

Could Nature's bounty satisfy the breast,
The sons of Italy were surely blest.
Whatever fruits in different climes are found,
That proudly rise or humbly court the ground ;
Whatever blooms in torrid tracts appear, 115
Whose bright succession decks the varied year ;
Whatever sweets salute the northern sky
With vernal lives, that blossom but to die ;
These, here disporting, own the kindred soil,
Nor ask luxuriance from the planter's toil ; 120
While sea-born gales their gelid wings expand
To winnow fragrance round the smiling land.

But small the bliss that sense alone bestows,
And sensual bliss is all the nation knows.
In florid beauty groves and fields appear ; 125
Man seems the only growth that dwindles here.
Contrasted faults through all his manners reign :

Though poor, luxurious ; though submissive, vain ;
Though grave, yet trifling ; zealous, yet untrue ;
And e'en in penance planning sins anew. 130
All evils here contaminate the mind
That opulence departed leaves behind ;
For wealth was theirs ; not far removed the date,
When commerce proudly flourish'd through the state ;
At her command the palace learnt to rise, 135
Again the long-fall'n column sought the skies,
The canvas glow'd, beyond e'en nature warm,
The pregnant quarry teem'd with human form ;
Till, more unsteady than the southern gale,
Commerce on other shores display'd her sail ; 140
While nought remain'd of all that riches gave,
But towns unmann'd, and lords without a slave :
And late the nation found with fruitless skill
Its former strength was but plethoric ill.
Yet still the loss of wealth is here supplied 145
By arts, the splendid wrecks of former pride ;
From these the feeble heart and long-fall'n mind
An easy compensation seem to find.
Here may be seen, in bloodless pomp array'd,
The pasteboard triumph and the cavalcade, 150
Processions form'd for piety and love,
A mistress or a saint in every grove.
By sports like these are all their cares beguil'd ;
The sports of children satisfy the child.
Each nobler aim, repress'd by long control, 155
Now sinks at last, or feebly mans the soul ;
While low delights, succeeding fast behind,
In happier meanness occupy the mind :
As in those domes where Caesars once bore sway,
Defac'd by time and tottering in decay, 160
There in the ruin, heedless of the dead,

The shelter-seeking peasant builds his shed ;
And, wond'ring man could want the larger pile,
Exults, and owns his cottage with a smile.

My soul, turn from them, turn we to survey, 165

Where rougher climes a nobler race display ;
Where the bleak Swiss their stormy mansions tread,
And force a churlish soil for scanty bread.

No product here the barren hills afford,

But man and steel, the soldier and his sword : 170

No vernal blooms their torpid rocks array,

But winter ling'ring chills the lap of May :

No Zephyr fondly sues the mountain's breast,

But meteors glare, and stormy glooms invest.

Yet still, e'en here, content can spread a charm, 175

Redress the clime, and all its rage disarm.

Though poor the peasant's hut, his feasts though small,

He sees his little lot the lot of all ;

Sees no contiguous palace rear its head

To shame the meanness of his humble shed ; 180

No costly lord the sumptuous banquet deal

To make him loathe his vegetable meal ;

But calm, and bred in ignorance and toil,

Each wish contracting fits him to the soil.

Cheerful at morn he wakes from short repose, 185

Breasts the keen air, and carols as he goes ;

With patient angle trolls the finny deep ;

Or drives his vent'rous ploughshare to the steep ;

Or seeks the den where snow-tracks mark the way

And drags the struggling savage into day. 190

At night returning every labour sped,

He sits him down the monarch of a shed ;

Smiles by his cheerful fire, and round surveys

His children's looks, that brighten at the blaze ;

While his lov'd partner, boastful of her hoard, 195

Displays her cleanly platter on the board :
 And haply too some pilgrim, thither led,
 With many a tale repays the nightly bed.

Thus every good his native wilds impart
 Imprints the patriot passion on his heart ; 200
 And e'en those ills that round his mansion rise
 Enhance the bliss his scanty fund supplies.
 Dear is that shed to which his soul conforms,
 And dear that hill which lifts him to the storms ;
 And as a child, when scaring sounds molest, 205
 Clings close and closer to the mother's breast,
 So the loud torrent and the whirlwind's roar
 But bind him to his native mountains more.

Such are the charms to barren states assign'd ;
 Their wants but few, their wishes all confin'd. 210
 Yet let them only share the praises due :
 If few their wants, their pleasures are but few ;
 For every want that stimulates the breast
 Becomes a source of pleasure when redrest ;
 Hence from such lands each pleasing science flies, 215
 That first excites desire, and then supplies ;
 Unknown to them, when sensual pleasures cloy,
 To fill the languid pause with finer joy ;
 Unknown those powers that raise the soul to flame,
 Catch every nerve, and vibrate through the frame. 220
 Their level life is but a smould'ring fire,
 Unquench'd by want, unfann'd by strong desire ;
 Unfit for raptures, or, if raptures cheer
 On some high festival of once a year,
 In wild excess the vulgar breast takes fire, 225
 Till, buried in debauch, the bliss expire.

But not their joys alone thus coarsely flow :
 Their morals, like their pleasures, are but low ;
 For, as refinement stops, from sire to son

Unalter'd, unimprov'd, the manners run, 230
 And love's and friendship's finely-pointed dart
 Fall blunted from each indurated heart.

Some sterner virtues o'er the mountain's breast
 May sit, like falcons cowering on the nest ;
 But all the gentler morals,—such as play 235
 Through life's more cultur'd walks, and charm the way,—
 These, far dispers'd, on timorous pinions fly,
 To sport and flutter in a kinder sky.

To kinder skies, where gentler manners reign,
 I turn ; and France displays her bright domain. 240
 Gay, sprightly land of mirth and social ease,
 Pleas'd with thyself, whom all the world can please,
 How often have I led thy sportive choir,
 With tuneless pipe, beside the murmuring Loire ?
 Where shading elms along the margin grew, 245
 And freshen'd from the wave the Zephyr flew ;
 And haply, though my harsh touch, falt'ring still,
 But mocked all tune, and marr'd the dancer's skill,
 Yet would the village praise my wondrous power,
 And dance, forgetful of the noon-tide hour. 250

Alike all ages. Dames of ancient days
 Have led their children through the mirthful maze,
 And the gay grandsire, skill'd in gestic lore,
 Has frisk'd beneath the burthen of threescore.
 So blest a life these thoughtless realms display ; 255

Thus idly busy rolls their world away ;
 Theirs are those arts that mind to mind endear,
 For honour forms the social temper here :
 Honour, that praise which real merit gains,
 Or even imaginary worth obtains, 260
 Here passes current ; paid from hand to hand
 It shifts in splendid traffic round the land ;
 From courts to camps, to cottages it strays,

And all are taught an avarice of praise.
 They please, are pleas'd ; they give to get esteem ; 265
 Till, seeming blest, they grow to what they seem.

But while this softer art their bliss supplies,
 It gives their follies also room to rise ;
 For praise too dearly lov'd, or warmly sought,
 Enfeebles all internal strength of thought ; 270

And the weak soul, within itself unblest,
 Leans for all pleasure on another's breast.

Hence ostentation here, with tawdry art,
 Pants for the vulgar praise which fools impart ;
 Here vanity assumes her pert grimace, 275

And trims her robes of frieze with copper lace ;
 Here beggar pride defrauds her daily cheer,
 To boast one splendid banquet once a year ;
 The mind still turns where shifting fashion draws,
 Nor weighs the solid worth of self-applause. 280

To men of other minds my fancy flies,
 Embosom'd in the deep where Holland lies.
 Methinks her patient sons before me stand,
 Where the broad ocean leans against the land,
 And, sedulous to stop the coming tide, 285
 Lift the tall rampire's artificial pride.

Onward, methinks, and diligently slow,
 The firm connected bulwark seems to grow,
 Spreads its long arms amidst the watery roar,
 Scoops out an empire, and usurps the shore ; 290

While the pent ocean, rising o'er the pile,
 Sees an amphibious world beneath him smile :
 The slow canal, the yellow-blossom'd vale,
 The willow-tufted bank, the gliding sail,
 The crowded mart, the cultivated plain,— 295
 A new creation rescu'd from his reign.

Thus, while around the wave-subjected soil

Impels the native to repeated toil,
Industrious habits in each bosom reign,
And industry begets a love of gain. 300
Hence all the good from opulence that springs,
With all those ills superfluous treasure brings,
Are here display'd. Their much-lov'd wealth imparts
Convenience, plenty, elegance, and arts :
But view them closer, craft and fraud appear ; 305
Even liberty itself is barter'd here.
At gold's superior charms all freedom flies ;
The needy sell it, and the rich man buys ;
A land of tyrants, and a den of slaves,
Here wretches seek dishonourable graves, 310
And calmly bent, to servitude conform,
Dull as their lakes that slumber in the storm.
Heavens ! how unlike their Belgic sires of old !
Rough, poor, content, ungovernably bold,
War in each breast, and freedom on each brow : 315
How much unlike the sons of Britain now !
Fir'd at the sound, my genius spreads her wing,
And flies where Britain courts the western spring ;
Where lawns extend that scorn Arcadian pride,
And brighter streams than fam'd Hydaspes glide. 320
There all around the gentlest breezes stray ;
There gentle music melts on every spray ;
Creation's mildest charms are there combin'd,
Extremes are only in the master's mind !
Stern o'er each bosom Reason holds her state, 325
With daring aims irregularly great ;
Pride in their port, defiance in their eye,
I see the lords of human kind pass by ;
Intent on high designs, a thoughtful band,
By forms unfashion'd, fresh from Nature's hand, 330
Fierce in their native hardness of soul,

True to imagin'd right, above control,
 While e'en the peasant boasts these rights to scan,
 And learns to venerate himself as man.

Thine, Freedom, thine the blessings pictur'd here ; 335

Thine are those charms that dazzle and endear :

Too blest indeed, were such without alloy :

But, foster'd e'en by Freedom, ills annoy :

That independence Britons prize too high

Keeps man from man, and breaks the social tie ; 340

The self-dependent lordlings stand alone,

All claims that bind and sweeten life unknown.

Here, by the bonds of nature feebly held,

Minds combat minds, repelling and repell'd ;

Ferments arise, imprison'd factions roar, 345

Represt ambition struggles round her shore,

Till, overwrought, the general system feels

Its motions stop, or frenzy fire the wheels.

Nor this the worst. As Nature's ties decay,

As duty, love, and honour fail to sway, 350

Fictitious bonds, the bonds of wealth and law,

Still gather strength, and force unwilling awe.

Hence all obedience bows to these alone,

And talent sinks, and merit weeps unknown :

Till time may come, when, stript of all her charms, 355

The land of scholars and the nurse of arms,

Where noble stems transmit the patriot flame,

Where kings have toil'd and poets wrote for fame,

One sink of level avarice shall lie,

And scholars, soldiers, kings, unhonour'd die. 360

Yet think not, thus when Freedom's ills I state,

I mean to flatter kings, or court the great :

Ye powers of truth that bid my soul aspire,

Far from my bosom drive the low desire!

And thou, fair Freedom, taught alike to feel 365

The rabble's rage, and tyrant's angry steel ;
 Thou transitory flower, alike undone
 By proud contempt, or favour's fostering sun,
 Still may thy blooms the changeful clime endure,
 I only would repress them to secure ! 370
 For just experience tells, in every soil,
 That those who think must govern those that toil ;
 And all that Freedom's highest aims can reach,
 Is but to lay proportion'd loads on each.
 Hence, should one order disproportion'd grow, 375
 Its double weight must ruin all below.

O then how blind to all that truth requires,
 Who think it freedom when a part aspires !
 Calm is my soul, nor apt to rise in arms,
 Except when fast approaching danger warms ; 380
 But when contending chiefs blockade the throne,
 Contracting regal power to stretch their own ;
 When I behold a factious band agree
 To call it freedom when themselves are free ;
 Each wanton judge new penal statutes draw, 385
 Laws grind the poor, and rich men rule the law ;
 The wealth of climes where savage nations roam,
 Pillag'd from slaves to purchase slaves at home,—
 Fear, pity, justice, indignation start,
 Tear off reserve, and bare my swelling heart ; 390
 Till half a patriot, half a coward grown,
 I fly from petty tyrants to the throne.

Yes, brother, curse with me that baleful hour
 When first ambition struck at regal power ;
 And thus polluting honour in its source, 395
 Gave wealth to sway the mind with double force.
 Have we not seen, round Britain's peopled shore,
 Her useful sons exchanged for useless ore ?
 Seen all her triumphs but destruction haste,

Like flaring tapers brightening as they waste? 400
 Seen Opulence, her grandeur to maintain,
 Lead stern Depopulation in her train,
 And over fields where scatter'd hamlets rose,
 In barren solitary pomp repose?

Have we not seen at pleasure's lordly call 405
 The smiling long-frequented village fall?
 Beheld the duteous son, the sire decay'd,
 The modest matron, and the blushing maid,
 Forc'd from their homes, a melancholy train,
 To traverse climes beyond the western main; 410
 Where wild Oswego spreads her swamps around,
 And Niagara stuns with thund'ring sound?

E'en now, perhaps, as there some pilgrim strays
 Through tangled forests and through dangerous ways,
 Where beasts with man divided empire claim, 415
 And the brown Indian marks with murderous aim :
 There, while above the giddy tempest flies,
 And all around distressful yells arise,
 The pensive exile, bending with his woe,
 To stop too fearful, and too faint to go, 420
 Casts a long look where England's glories shine,
 And bids his bosom sympathize with mine.

Vain, very vain, my weary search to find
 That bliss which only centres in the mind :
 Why have I stray'd from pleasure and repose, 425
 To seek a good each government bestows?
 In every government, though terrors reign,
 Though tyrant kings or tyrant laws restrain,
 How small, of all that human hearts endure,
 That part which laws or kings can cause or cure! 430
 Still to ourselves in every place consign'd,
 Our own felicity we make or find :
 With secret course, which no loud storms annoy,

Glides the smooth current of domestic joy.
 The lifted axe, the agonizing wheel,
 Luke's iron crown, and Damien's bed of steel,
 To men remote from power but rarely known,
 Leave reason, faith, and conscience, all our own.

435

THE DESERTED VILLAGE.

Sweet Auburn! loveliest village of the plain,
 Where health and plenty cheer'd the labouring swain,
 Where smiling spring its earliest visit paid,
 And parting summer's lingering blooms delay'd :
 Dear lovely bowers of innocence and ease, 5
 Seats of my youth, when every sport could please,
 How often have I loiter'd o'er thy green,
 Where humble happiness endear'd each scene !
 How often have I paused on every charm,
 The shelter'd cot, the cultivated farm, 10
 The never-failing brook, the busy mill,
 The decent church that topt the neighbouring hill,
 The hawthorn bush, with seats beneath the shade,
 For talking age and whisp'ring lovers made !
 How often have I blest the coming day, 15
 When toil remitting lent its turn to play,
 And all the village train, from labour free,
 Led up their sports beneath the spreading tree ;
 While many a pastime circled in the shade,
 The young contending as the old survey'd ; 20
 And many a gambol frolick'd o'er the ground,
 And sleights of art and feats of strength went round ;
 And still, as each repeated pleasure tired,

Succeeding sports the mirthful band inspired ;
The dancing pair that simply sought renown 25
By holding out to tire each other down :
The swain mistrustless of his smutted face,
While secret laughter titter'd round the place ;
The bashful virgin's sidelong looks of love,
The matron's glance that would those looks reprove : 30
These were thy charms, sweet village ! sports like these,
With sweet succession, taught e'en toil to please :
These round thy bowers their cheerful influence shed,
These were thy charms—but all these charms are fled.

Sweet smiling village, loveliest of the lawn, 35
Thy sports are fled, and all thy charms withdrawn ;
Amidst thy bowers the tyrant's hand is seen,
And desolation saddens all thy green :
One only master grasps the whole domain,
And half a tillage stints thy smiling plain. 40
No more thy glassy brook reflects the day,
But, choked with sedges, works its weedy way ;
Along thy glades, a solitary guest,
The hollow-sounding bittern guards its nest ;
Amidst thy desert walks the lapwing flies, 45
And tires their echoes with unvaried cries ;
Sunk are thy bowers in shapeless ruin all,
And the long grass o'ertops the mouldering wall ;
And trembling, shrinking from the spoiler's hand,
Far, far away, thy children leave the land. 50

Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,
Where wealth accumulates, and men decay :
Princes and lords may flourish, or may fade ;
A breath can make them, as a breath has made :
But a bold peasantry, their country's pride, 55
When once destroy'd, can never be supplied.

A time there was, ere England's griefs began,

When every rood of ground maintain'd its man ;
For him light labour spread her wholesome store,
Just gave what life required, but gave no more : 60
His best companions, innocence and health ;
And his best riches, ignorance of wealth.

But times are alter'd ; trade's unfeeling train
Usurp the land, and dispossess the swain ;
Along the lawn, where scatter'd hamlets rose, 65
Unwieldy wealth and cumbrous pomp repose,
And every want to opulence allied,
And every pang that folly pays to pride.
Those gentle hours that plenty bade to bloom,
Those calm desires that ask'd but little room, 70
Those healthful sports that graced the peaceful scene,
Lived in each look, and brighten'd all the green,—
These, far departing, seek a kinder shore,
And rural mirth and manners are no more.

Sweet Auburn ! parent of the blissful hour, 75
Thy glades forlorn confess the tyrant's power.
Here, as I take my solitary rounds,
Amidst thy tangling walks and ruin'd grounds,
And, many a year elapsed, return to view
Where once the cottage stood, the hawthorn grew, 80
Remembrance wakes with all her busy train,
Swells at my breast, and turns the past to pain.

In all my wanderings round this world of care,
In all my griefs—and God has given my share—
I still had hopes, my latest hours to crown, 85
Amidst these humble bowers to lay me down ;
To husband out life's taper at the close,
And keep the flame from wasting by repose :
I still had hopes, for pride attends us still,
Amidst the swains to show my book-learn'd skill, 90
Around my fire an evening group to draw,

And tell of all I felt, and all I saw ;
 And as a hare whom hounds and horns pursue,
 Pants to the place from whence at first she flew,
 I still had hopes, my long vexations past, 95
 Here to return, and die at home at last.

O blest retirement, friend to life's decline,
 Retreats from care, that never must be mine !
 How happy he who crowns in shades like these
 A youth of labour with an age of ease ; 100
 Who quits a world where strong temptations try,
 And, since 'tis hard to combat, learns to fly !
 For him no wretches, born to work and weep,
 Explore the mine, or tempt the dang'rous deep ;
 No surly porter stands in guilty state, 105
 To spurn imploring famine from the gate ;
 But on he moves to meet his latter end,
 Angels around befriending virtue's friend ;
 Bends to the grave with unperceived decay,
 While resignation gently slopes the way ; 110
 And, all his prospects brightening to the last,
 His heaven commences ere the world be past !

Sweet was the sound, when oft at evening's close
 Up yonder hill the village murmur rose.
 There, as I past with careless steps and slow, 115
 The mingling notes came soften'd from below ;
 The swain responsive as the milk-maid sung,
 The sober herd that low'd to meet their young,
 The noisy geese that gabbled o'er the pool,
 The playful children just let loose from school, 120
 The watch-dog's voice that bayed the whispering wind,
 And the loud laugh that spoke the vacant mind,—
 These all in sweet confusion sought the shade,
 And filled each pause the nightingale had made.
 But now the sounds of population fail, 125

No cheerful murmurs fluctuate in the gale,
 No busy steps the grass-grown foot-way tread,
 For all the bloomy flush of life is fled!
 All but yon widow'd, solitary thing,
 That feebly bends beside the plashy spring : 130
 She, wretched matron, forced in age, for bread,
 To strip the brook with mantling cresses spread,
 To pick her wintry faggot from the thorn,
 To seek her nightly shed, and weep till morn ;
 She only left of all the harmless train, 135
 The sad historian of the pensive plain.

Near yonder copse, where once the garden smiled,
 And still where many a garden flower grows wild ;
 There, where a few torn shrubs the place disclose,
 The village preacher's modest mansion rose. 140
 A man he was to all the country dear,
 And passing rich with forty pounds a year ;
 Remote from towns he ran his godly race,
 Nor e'er had changed, nor wish'd to change his place ;
 Unpractis'd he to fawn, or seek for power, 145
 By doctrines fashion'd to the varying hour ;
 Far other aims his heart had learn'd to prize,
 More skill'd to raise the wretched than to rise.
 His house was known to all the vagrant train ;
 He chid their wanderings but relieved their pain : 150
 The long remember'd beggar was his guest,
 Whose beard descending swept his aged breast ;
 The ruin'd spendthrift, now no longer proud,
 Claim'd kindred there, and had his claims allow'd ;
 The broken soldier, kindly bade to stay, 155
 Sat by his fire, and talk'd the night away,
 Wept o'er his wounds, or, tales of sorrow done,
 Shoulder'd his crutch and show'd how fields were won.
 Pleased with his guests, the good man learn'd to glow,

And quite forgot their vices in their woe ; 160
Careless their merits or their faults to scan,
His pity gave ere charity began.

Thus to relieve the wretched was his pride,
And e'en his failings lean'd to virtue's side ;
But in his duty prompt at every call, 165
He watch'd and wept, he pray'd and felt for all ;
And, as a bird each fond endearment tries
To tempt its new-fledged offspring to the skies,
He tried each art, reproved each dull delay,
Allured to brighter worlds, and led the way. 170

Beside the bed where parting life was laid,
And sorrow, guilt, and pain, by turns dismay'd,
The reverend champion stood. At his control
Despair and anguish fled the struggling soul ;
Comfort came down the trembling wretch to raise, 175
And his last faltering accents whisper'd praise.

At church, with meek and unaffected grace,
His looks adorn'd the venerable place ;
Truth from his lips prevail'd with double sway,
And fools who came to scoff, remain'd to pray. 180
The service past, around the pious man,
With steady zeal, each honest rustic ran ;
E'en children followed with endearing wile,
And plucked his gown to share the good man's smile.
His ready smile a parent's warmth exprest : 185
Their welfare pleased him, and their cares distrest :
To them his heart, his love, his griefs were given,
But all his serious thoughts had rest in heaven.
As some tall cliff that lifts its awful form,
Swells from the vale, and midway leaves the storm, 190
Though round its breast the rolling clouds are spread,
Eternal sunshine settles on its head.

Beside yon straggling fence that skirts the way,

With blossom'd furze unprofitably gay,
 There, in his noisy mansion, skill'd to rule, 195
 The village master taught his little school.
 A man severe he was, and stern to view ;
 I knew him well, and every truant knew :
 Well had the boding tremblers learn'd to trace
 The day's disasters in his morning face ; 200
 Full well they laugh'd with counterfeited glee
 At all his jokes, for many a joke had he ;
 Full well the busy whisper circling round
 Convey'd the dismal tidings when he frown'd.
 Yet he was kind, or, if severe in aught, 205
 The love he bore to learning was in fault ;
 The village all declared how much he knew :
 'Twas certain he could write, and cypher too :
 Lands he could measure, terms and tides presage,
 And even the story ran that he could gauge : 210
 In arguing, too, the parson own'd his skill,
 For, even though vanquish'd, he could argue still ;
 While words of learned length and thundering sound
 Amazed the gazing rustics ranged around ;
 And still they gazed, and still the wonder grew, 215
 That one small head could carry all he knew.
 But past is all his fame. The very spot
 Where many a time he triumph'd is forgot.
 Near yonder thorn, that lifts its head on high,
 Where once the sign-post caught the passing eye, 220
 Low lies that house where nut-brown draughts inspired,
 Where grey-beard mirth and smiling toil retired,
 Where village statesmen talk'd with looks profound,
 And news much older than their ale went round.
 Imagination fondly stoops to trace 225
 The parlour splendours of that festive place :
 The white-wash'd wall, the nicely-sanded floor,

The varnish'd clock that click'd behind the door ;
 The chest contrived a double debt to pay,
 A bed by night, a chest of drawers by day ; 230
 The pictures placed for ornament and use,
 The Twelve Good Rules, the Royal Game of Goose ;
 The hearth, except when winter chill'd the day,
 With aspen boughs, and flowers, and fennel gay ;
 While broken tea-cups, wisely kept for show, 235
 Ranged o'er the chimney, glisten'd in a row.

Vain transitory splendours ! could not all
 Reprieve the tottering mansion from its fall ?
 Obscure it sinks, nor shall it more impart
 An hour's importance to the poor man's heart. 240
 Thither no more the peasant shall repair
 To sweet oblivion of his daily care ;
 No more the farmer's news, the barber's tale,
 No more the woodman's ballad shall prevail ;
 No more the smith his dusky brow shall clear, 245
 Relax his pond'rous strength, and lean to hear ;
 The host himself no longer shall be found
 Careful to see the mantling bliss go round ;
 Nor the coy maid, half willing to be prest,
 Shall kiss the cup to pass it to the rest. 250

Yes ! let the rich deride, the proud disdain,
 These simple blessings of the lowly train ;
 To me more dear, congenial to my heart,
 One native charm, than all the gloss of art :
 Spontaneous joys, where nature has its play, 255
 The soul adopts, and owns their firstborn sway ;
 Lightly they frolic o'er the vacant mind,
 Unenvied, unmolested, unconfined.
 But the long pomp, the midnight masquerade,
 With all the freaks of wanton wealth array'd— 260
 In these, ere triflers half their wish obtain,

The toiling pleasure sickens into pain ;
 And, e'en while fashion's brightest arts decoy,
 The heart distrusting asks if this be joy.

Ye friends to truth, ye statesmen who survey 265

The rich man's joys increase, the poor's decay,
 'Tis yours to judge, how wide the limits stand
 Between a splendid and a happy land.

Proud swells the tide with loads of freighted ore,
 And shouting Folly hails them from her shore ; 270

Hoards e'en beyond the miser's wish abound,
 And rich men flock from all the world around.

Yet count our gains. This wealth is but a name
 That leaves our useful products still the same.

Not so the loss. The man of wealth and pride 275

Takes up a space that many poor supplied ;
 Space for his lake, his park's extended bounds,
 Space for his horses, equipage, and hounds :

The robe that wraps his limbs in silken sloth
 Has robbed the neighbouring fields of half their growth : 280

His seat, where solitary sports are seen,
 Indignant spurns the cottage from the green :

Around the world each needful product flies,

For all the luxuries the world supplies ;

While thus the land adorn'd for pleasure, all 285

In barren splendour feebly waits the fall.

As some fair female unadorn'd and plain,

Secure to please while youth confirms her reign,

Slights every borrow'd charm that dress supplies,

Nor shares with art the triumph of her eyes ; 290

But when those charms are past, for charms are frail,

When time advances, and when lovers fail,

She then shines forth, solicitous to bless,

In all the glaring impotence of dress.

Thus fares the land by luxury betray'd ; 295

In nature's simplest charms at first array'd,
 But verging to decline, its splendours rise ;
 Its vistas strike, its palaces surprise :
 While, scourged by famine from the smiling land,
 The mournful peasant leads his humble band, 300
 And while he sinks, without one arm to save,
 The country blooms—a garden and a grave.

Where then, ah ! where, shall poverty reside,
 To scape the pressure of contiguous pride ?
 If to some common's fenceless limits stray'd 305
 He drives his flock to pick the scanty blade,
 Those fenceless fields the sons of wealth divide,
 And even the bare-worn common is denied.

If to the city sped—what waits him there ?
 To see profusion that he must not share ; 310
 To see ten thousand baneful arts combined
 To pamper luxury, and thin mankind ;
 To see those joys the sons of pleasure know
 Extorted from his fellow-creature's woe.
 Here while the courtier glitters in brocade, 315
 There the pale artist plies his sickly trade ;
 Here while the proud their long-drawn pomps display,
 There the black gibbet glooms beside the way.
 The dome where pleasure holds her midnight reign
 Here, richly deck'd, admits the gorgeous train : 320
 Tumultuous grandeur crowds the blazing square,
 The rattling chariots clash, the torches glare.
 Sure scenes like these no troubles e'er annoy !
 Sure these denote one universal joy !
 Are these thy serious thoughts ?—Ah, turn thine eyes 325
 Where the poor houseless shivering female lies.
 She once, perhaps, in village plenty blest,
 Has wept at tales of innocence distress ;
 Her modest looks the cottage might adorn,

Sweet as the primrose peeps beneath the thorn : 330
Now lost to all—her friends, her virtue fled,
Near her betrayer's door she lays her head,
And, pinch'd with cold, and shrinking from the shower,
With heavy heart deplores that luckless hour,
When idly first, ambitious of the town, 335
She left her wheel and robes of country brown.

Do thine, sweet Auburn, thine, the loveliest train,—
Do thy fair tribes participate her pain ?
Even now, perhaps, by cold and hunger led,
At proud men's doors they ask a little bread ! 340

Ah, no ! To distant climes, a dreary scene,
Where half the convex world intrudes between,
Through torrid tracts with fainting steps they go,
Where wild Altama murmurs to their woe.
Far different there from all that charm'd before, 345
The various terrors of that horrid shore ;
Those blazing suns that dart a downward ray,
And fiercely shed intolerable day ;
Those matted woods, where birds forget to sing,
But silent bats in drowsy clusters cling ; 350
Those poisonous fields with rank luxuriance crown'd,
Where the dark scorpion gathers death around ;
Where at each step the stranger fears to wake
The rattling terrors of the vengeful snake ;
Where crouching tigers wait their hapless prey, 355
And savage men more murd'rous still than they ;
While oft in whirls the mad tornado flies,
Mingling the ravaged landscape with the skies.
Far different these from every former scene,
The cooling brook, the grassy-vested green, 360
The breezy covert of the warbling grove,
That only shelter'd thefts of harmless love.

Good Heaven ! what sorrows gloom'd that parting day,

That call'd them from their native walks away ;
When the poor exiles, every pleasure past, 365
Hung round their bowers, and fondly look'd their last,
And took a long farewell, and wish'd in vain
For seats like these beyond the western main,
And shuddering still to face the distant deep,
Return'd and wept, and still return'd to weep ! 370
The good old sire the first prepared to go
To new found worlds, and wept for others' woe ;
But for himself, in conscious virtue brave,
He only wish'd for worlds beyond the grave.
His lovely daughter, lovelier in her tears, 375
The fond companion of his helpless years,
Silent went next, neglectful of her charms,
And left a lover's for a father's arms.
With louder complaints the mother spoke her woes,
And blest the cot where every pleasure rose, 380
And kiss'd her thoughtless babes with many a tear,
And clasp'd them close, in sorrow doubly dear,
Whilst her fond husband strove to lend relief
In all the silent manliness of grief.
O luxury ! thou curst by Heaven's decree, 385
How ill exchanged are things like these for thee !
How do thy potions, with insidious joy,
Diffuse their pleasures only to destroy !
Kingdoms by thee, to sickly greatness grown,
Boast of a florid vigour not their own. 390
At every draught more large and large they grow,
A bloated mass of rank unwieldy woe ;
Till sapp'd their strength, and every part unsound,
Down, down they sink, and spread a ruin round.
Even now the devastation is begun, 395
And half the business of destruction done ;
E'en now, methinks, as pond'ring here I stand,

I see the rural virtues leave the land.
Down where yon anchoring vessel spreads the sail,
That idly waiting flaps with every gale, 400
Downward they move, a melancholy band,
Pass from the shore, and darken all the strand.
Contented toil, and hospitable care,
And kind connubial tenderness, are there ;
And piety, with wishes placed above, 405
And steady loyalty, and faithful love.
And thou, sweet Poetry, thou loveliest maid,
Still first to fly where sensual joys invade ;
Unfit in these degenerate times of shame
To catch the heart, or strike for honest fame ; 410
Dear charming nymph, neglected and decried,
My shame in crowds, my solitary pride ;
Thou source of all my bliss, and all my woe,
That found'st me poor at first, and keep'st me so ;
Thou guide by which the nobler arts excel, 415
Thou nurse of every virtue, fare thee well !
Farewell, and Oh ! where'er thy voice be tried,
On Torno's cliffs, or Pambamarca's side,
Whether where equinoctial fervours glow,
Or winter wraps the polar world in snow, 420
Still let thy voice, prevailing over time,
Redress the rigours of the inclement clime ;
Aid slighted truth with thy persuasive strain,
Teach erring man to spurn the rage of gain ;
Teach him, that states of native strength possesst, 425
Though very poor, may still be very blest ;
That trade's proud empire hastes to swift decay,
As ocean sweeps the labour'd mole away ;
While self-dependent power can time defy,
As rocks resist the billows and the sky. 430

WORDSWORTH.

UPON WESTMINSTER BRIDGE.

SEPT. 3, 1802.

Earth has not anything to show more fair :
Dull would he be of soul who could pass by
A sight so touching in its majesty :
This City now doth like a garment wear
The beauty of the morning : silent, bare, 5
Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples lie
Open unto the fields, and to the sky,—
All bright and glittering in the smokeless air.
Never did sun more beautifully steep
In his first splendour valley, rock, or hill ; 10
Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep !
The river glideth at his own sweet will :
Dear God ! the very houses seem asleep ;
And all that mighty heart is lying still !

THE GREEN LINNET.

Beneath these fruit-tree boughs that shed
Their snow-white blossoms on my head,
With brightest sunshine round me spread
Of Spring's unclouded weather,
In this sequester'd nook how sweet 5
To sit upon my orchard-seat !
And flowers and birds once more to greet,
My last year's friends together.

One have I mark'd, the happiest guest
In all this covert of the blest : 10
Hail to Thee, far above the rest
In joy of voice and pinion !
Thou, Linnet ! in thy green array
Presiding Spirit here to-day
Dost lead the revels of the May, 15
And this is thy dominion.

While birds, and butterflies, and flowers
Make all one band of paramours,
Thou, ranging up and down the bowers,
Art sole in thy employment ; 20
A Life, a Presence like the air,
Scattering thy gladness without care,
Too blest with any one to pair,
Thyself thy own enjoyment.

Amid yon tuft of hazel trees 25
That twinkle to the gusty breeze,
Behold him perch'd in ecstasies
Yet seeming still to hover ;
There ! where the flutter of his wings
Upon his back and body flings 30
Shadows and sunny glimmerings,
That cover him all over.

My dazzled sight he oft deceives—
A brother of the dancing leaves ;
Then flits, and from the cottage-eaves 35
Pours forth his song in gushes ;
As if by that exulting strain
He mock'd and treated with disdain
The voiceless Form he chose to feign
While fluttering in the bushes. 40

TO THE CUCKOO.

O blithe new-comer ! I have heard,
I hear thee and rejoice :
O Cuckoo ! shall I call thee Bird,
Or but a wandering Voice ?

While I am lying on the grass 5
Thy twofold shout I hear ;
From hill to hill it seems to pass,
At once far off and near.

Though babbling only to the vale
Of sunshine and of flowers, 10
Thou bringest unto me a tale
Of visionary hours.

Thrice welcome, darling of the Spring !
Even yet thou art to me
No bird, but an invisible thing, 15
A voice, a mystery ;

The same whom in my school-boy days
I listen'd to ; that Cry
Which made me look a thousand ways
In bush, and tree, and sky. 20

To seek thee did I often rove
Through woods and on the green ;
And thou wert still a hope, a love ;
Still long'd for, never seen !

And I can listen to thee yet ; 25
Can lie upon the plain
And listen, till I do beget
That golden time again.

O blesséd Bird ! the earth we pace
 Again appears to be 30
 An unsubstantial, faery place
 That is fit home for Thee !

SHE WAS A PHANTOM OF DELIGHT.

She was a Phantom of delight
 When first she gleam'd upon my sight ;
 A lovely Apparition, sent
 To be a moment's ornament ;
 Her eyes as stars of twilight fair ; 5
 Like Twilight's, too, her dusky hair ;
 But all things else about her drawn
 From May-time and the cheerful dawn ;
 A dancing shape, an image gay,
 To haunt, to startle, and waylay. 10

I saw her upon nearer view,
 A Spirit, yet a Woman too !
 Her household motions light and free,
 And steps of virgin-liberty ;
 A countenance in which did meet 15
 Sweet records, promises as sweet ;
 A creature not too bright or good
 For human nature's daily food,
 For transient sorrows, simple wiles,
 Praise, blame, love, kisses, tears, and smiles. 20

And now I see with eye serene
 The very pulse of the machine ;
 A being breathing thoughtful breath,
 A traveller between life and death :
 The reason firm, the temperate will, 25

Endurance, foresight, strength, and skill ;
 A perfect Woman, nobly plann'd
 To warn, to comfort, and command ;
 And yet a Spirit still, and bright
 With something of an angel-light.

30

THOUGHT OF A BRITON ON THE SUBJUGATION OF SWITZERLAND.

(ENGLAND AND SWITZERLAND.)

Two Voices are there ; one is of the Sea,
 One of the Mountains ; each a mighty voice :
 In both from age to age thou didst rejoice,
 They were thy chosen music, Liberty !
 There came a tyrant, and with holy glee
 Thou fought'st against him,—but hast vainly striven :
 Thou from thy Alpine holds at length art driven
 Where not a torrent murmurs heard by thee.
 Of one deep bliss thine ear hath been bereft ;
 Then cleave, O cleave to that which still is left ;
 For, high-soul'd Maid, what sorrow would it be
 That Mountain floods should thunder as before,
 And Ocean bellow from his rocky shore,
 And neither awful Voice be heard by thee!

5

10

THE INNER VISION.

Most sweet it is with unuplifted eyes
 To pace the ground, if path be there or none,
 While a fair region round the traveller lies
 Which he forbears again to look upon ;

Pleased rather with some soft ideal scene, 5
The work of Fancy, or some happy tone
Of meditation, slipping in between
The beauty coming and the beauty gone.
If Thought and Love desert us, from that day
Let us break off all commerce with the Muse : 10
With Thought and Love companions of our way,
Whate'er the senses take or may refuse,
The Mind's internal heaven shall shed her dews
Of inspiration on the humblest lay.



The Bridge of Sighs.

SEE PAGE 39

SCOTT.

ROSABELLE.

- O listen, listen, ladies gay !
No haughty feat of arms I tell ;
Soft is the note, and sad the lay
That mourns the lovely Rosabelle.
- ‘ Moor, moor the barge, ye gallant crew ! 5
And, gentle ladye, deign to stay !
Rest thee in Castle Ravensheuch,
Nor tempt the stormy firth to-day.
- ‘ The blackening wave is edged with white ;
To inch and rock the sea-mews fly ; 10
The fishers have heard the Water-Sprite,
Whose screams forebode that wreck is nigh.
- ‘ Last night the gifted Seer did view
A wet shroud swathed round ladye gay ;
Then stay thee, Fair, in Ravensheuch ; 15
Why cross the gloomy firth to-day ?’
- ‘ ’Tis not because Lord Lindesay’s heir
To-night at Roslin leads the ball,
But that my ladye-mother there
Sits lonely in her castle-hall. 20
- ‘ ’Tis not because the ring they ride,
And Lindesay at the ring rides well,
But that my sire the wine will chide
If ’tis not fill’d by Rosabelle.’

—O'er Roslin all that dreary night 25
A wondrous blaze was seen to gleam ;
'Twas broader than the watch-fire's light,
And redder than the bright moonbeam.

It glared on Roslin's castled rock,
It ruddied all the copse-wood glen ; 30
'Twas seen from Dryden's groves of oak,
And seen from cavern'd Hawthornden

Seem'd all on fire that chapel proud
Where Roslin's chiefs uncoffin'd lie,
Each Baron, for a sable shroud, 35
Sheath'd in his iron panoply.

Seem'd all on fire within, around,
Deep sacristy and altar's pale ;
Shone every pillar foliage-bound,
And glimmer'd all the dead men's mail. 40

Blazed battlement and pinnet high,
Blazed every rose-carved buttress fair—
So still they blaze, when fate is nigh
The lordly line of high Saint Clair.

There are twenty of Roslin's barons bold 45
Lie buried within that proud chapelle ;
Each one the holy vault doth hold,
But the sea holds lovely Rosabelle !

And each Saint Clair was buried there
With candle, with book, and with knell ; 50
But the sea-caves rung, and the wild winds sung
The dirge of lovely Rosabelle.

THE OUTLAW.

- O Brignall banks are wild and fair,
 And Greta woods are green,
 And you may gather garlands there
 Would grace a summer-queen.
 And as I rode by Dalton-Hall 5
 Beneath the turrets high,
 A Maiden on the castle-wall
 Was singing merrily :
 ‘ O Brignall Banks are fresh and fair,
 And Greta woods are green ; 10
 I’d rather rove with Edmund there
 Than reign our English queen.’
- ‘ If, Maiden, thou wouldst wend with me,
 To leave both tower and town,
 Thou first must guess what life lead we 15
 That dwell by dale and down.
 And if thou canst that riddle read,
 As read full well you may,
 Then to the greenwood shalt thou speed
 As blithe as Queen of May.’ 20
 Yet sung she ‘ Brignall banks are fair,
 And Greta woods are green ;
 I’d rather rove with Edmund there
 Than reign our English queen.
- ‘ I read you by your bugle-horn 25
 And by your palfrey good,
 I read you for a ranger sworn
 To keep the king’s greenwood.’
 ‘ A Ranger, lady, winds his horn,
 And ’tis at peep of light ; 30

His blast is heard at merry morn,
And mine at dead of night.'
Yet sung she 'Brignall banks are fair,
And Greta woods are gay ;
I would I were with Edmund there 35
To reign his Queen of May !

'With burnish'd brand and musketoon
So gallantly you come,
I read you for a bold Dragoon
That lists the tuck of drum.' 40
'I list no more the tuck of drum,
No more the trumpet hear ;
But when the beetle sounds his hum
My comrades take the spear.
And O ! though Brignall banks be fair 45
And Greta woods be gay,
Yet mickle must the maiden dare
Would reign my Queen of May !

'Maiden ! a nameless life I lead,
A nameless death I'll die ! 50
The fiend whose lantern lights the mead
Were better mate than I !
And when I'm with my comrades met
Beneath the greenwood bough,
What once we were we all forget, 55
Nor think what we are now.'

CHORUS.

'Yet Brignall banks are fresh and fair,
And Greta woods are green,
And you may gather garlands there
Would grace a summer-queen.' 60

THE ROVER.

' A weary lot is thine, fair maid,
 A weary lot is thine !
 To pull the thorn thy brow to braid,
 And press the rue for wine.
 A lightsome eye, a soldier's mien, 5
 A feather of the blue,
 A doublet of the Lincoln green—
 No more of me you knew
 My Love '
 No more of me you knew. 10

' The morn is merry June, I trow,
 The rose is budding fain ;
 But she shall bloom in winter snow
 Ere we two meet again.'
 He turn'd his charger as he spake 15
 Upon the river shore,
 He gave the bridle-reins a shake,
 Said ' Adieu for evermore
 My Love
 And adieu for evermore.' 20

JOCK OF HAZELDEAN.

' Why weep ye by the tide, ladie ?
 Why weep ye by the tide ?
 I'll wed ye to my youngest son,
 And ye sall be his bride :
 And ye sall be his bride, ladie, 5
 Sae comely to be seen '—
 But aye she loot the tears down fa'
 For Jock of Hazeldean.

‘ Now let this wilfu’ grief be done,
And dry that cheek so pale ; 10
Young Frank is chief of Errington
And lord of Langley-dale ;
His step is first in peaceful ha’,
His sword in battle keen ’—
But aye she loot the tears down fa’ 15
For Jock of Hazeldean.

‘ A chain of gold ye sall not lack,
Nor braid to bind your hair,
Nor mettled hound, nor managed hawk,
Nor palfrey fresh and fair ; 20
And you the foremost o’ them a’
Shall ride our forest-queen ’—
But aye she loot the tears down fa’
For Jock of Hazeldean.

The kirk was deck’d at morning-tide, 25
The tapers glimmer’d fair ;
The priest and bridegroom wait the bride,
And dame and knight are there :
They sought her baith by bower and ha’ ;
The ladie was not seen ! 30
She’s o’er the Border, and awa’
Wi’ Jock of Hazeldean.

BYRON.

CHILDE HAROLD'S PILGRIMAGE.

CANTO IV.

I stood in Venice, on the Bridge of Sighs ;
A palace and a prison on each hand :
I saw from out the wave her structures rise
As from the stroke of the enchanter's wand :
A thousand years their cloudy wings expand 5
Around me, and a dying Glory smiles
O'er the far times, when many a subject land
Look'd to the winged Lion's marble piles,
Where Venice sate in state, throned on her hundred isles !

She looks a sea Cybele, fresh from ocean, 10
Rising with her tiara of proud towers
At airy distance, with majestic motion,
A ruler of the waters and their powers :
And such she was ;—her daughters had their dowers
From spoils of nations, and the exhaustless East 15
Pour'd in her lap all gems in sparkling showers.
In purple was she robed, and of her feast
Monarchs partook, and deem'd their dignity increased.

In Venice Tasso's echoes are no more,
And silent rows the songless gondolier ; 20
Her palaces are crumbling to the shore,
And music meets not always now the ear :
Those days are gone—but Beauty still is here.

States fall, arts fade—but Nature doth not die,
Nor yet forget how Venice once was dear, 25
The pleasant place of all festivity,
The revel of the earth, the masque of Italy !

But unto us she hath a spell beyond
Her name in story, and her long array
Of mighty shadows, whose dim forms despond 30
Above the dogeless city's vanish'd sway ;
Ours is a trophy which will not decay
With the Rialto ; Shylock and the Moor,
And Pierre, cannot be swept or worn away—
The keystones of the arch ! though all were o'er, 35
For us repeopled were the solitary shore.

The beings of the mind are not of clay ;
Essentially immortal, they create
And multiply in us a brighter ray
And more beloved existence : that which Fate 40
Prohibits to dull life, in this our state
Of mortal bondage, by these spirits supplied,
First exiles, then replaces what we hate ;
Watering the heart whose early flowers have died,
And with a fresher growth replenishing the void. 45

Such is the refuge of our youth and age,
The first from Hope, the last from Vacancy ;
And this worn feeling peoples many a page,
And, may be, that which grows beneath mine eye :
Yet there are things whose strong reality 50
Outshines our fairy-land ; in shape and hues
More beautiful than our fantastic sky,
And the strange constellations which the Muse
O'er her wild universe is skilful to diffuse .

I saw or dream'd of such,—but let them go,— 55
 They came like truth, and disappear'd like dreams ;
 And whatsoe'er they were—are now but so :
 I could replace them if I would ; still teems
 My mind with many a form which aptly seems
 Such as I sought for, and at moments found ; 60
 Let these too go—for waking Reason deems
 Such overweening phantasies unsound,
 And other voices speak, and other sights surround.

I've taught me other tongues, and in strange eyes 65
 Have made me not a stranger ; to the mind
 Which is itself, no changes bring surprise ;
 Nor is it harsh to make, nor hard to find
 A country with—ay, or without mankind ;
 Yet was I born where men are proud to be,—
 Not without cause ; and should I leave behind 70
 The inviolate island of the sage and free,
 And seek me out a home by a remoter sea,

Perhaps I loved it well : and should I lay
 My ashes in a soil which is not mine,
 My spirit shall resume it—if we may 75
 Unbodied choose a sanctuary. I twine
 My hopes of being remember'd in my line
 With my land's language : if too fond and far
 These aspirations in their scope incline,—
 If my fame should be, as my fortunes are, 80
 Of hasty growth and blight, and dull Oblivion bar

My name from out the temple where the dead
 Are honour'd by the nations—let it be—
 And light the laurels on a loftier head !
 And be the Spartan's epitaph on me— 85

"Sparta hath many a worthier son than he."
 Meantime I seek no sympathies, nor need ;
 The thorns which I have reap'd are of the tree
 I planted : they have torn me, and I bleed :
 I should have known what fruit would spring from such a seed.

The spouseless Adriatic mourns her lord ; 91
 And, annual marriage now no more renew'd,
 The Bucentaur lies rotting unrestored,
 Neglected garment of her widowhood !
 St. Mark yet sees his lion where he stood 95
 Stand, but in mockery of his wither'd power,
 Over the proud Place where an Emperor sued,
 And monarchs gazed and envied in the hour
 When Venice was a queen with an unequall'd dower.

The Suabian sued, and now the Austrian reigns— 100
 An Emperor tramples where an Emperor knelt,
 Kingdoms are shrunk to provinces, and chains
 Clank over sceptred cities ; nations melt
 From power's high pinnacle, when they have felt
 The sunshine for a while, and downward go 105
 Like lauwine loosen'd from the mountain's belt ;
 Oh for one hour of blind old Dandolo !
 Th' octogenarian chief, Byzantium's conquering foe.

Before St. Mark still glow his steeds of brass,
 Their gilded collars glittering in the sun ; 110
 But is not Doria's menace come to pass ?
 Are they not *bridled* ?— Venice, lost and won,
 Her thirteen hundred years of freedom done,
 Sinks, like a seaweed, into whence she rose !
 Better be whelm'd beneath the waves, and shun, 115
 Even in destruction's depth, her foreign foes,
 From whom submission wrings an infamous repose.

In youth she was all glory,—a new Tyre ;
 Her very by-word sprung from victory,
 The “ Planter of the Lion,” which through fire 120
 And blood she bore o’er subject earth and sea ;
 Though making many slaves, herself still free,
 And Europe’s bulwark ’gainst the Ottomite ;
 Witness Troy’s rival, Candia ! Vouch it, ye
 Immortal waves that saw Lepanto’s fight ! 125
 For ye are names no time nor tyranny can blight.

Statues of glass—all shiver’d—the long file
 Of her dead Doges are declined to dust ;
 But where they dwelt, the vast and sumptuous pile
 Bespeaks the pageant of their splendid trust ; 130
 Their sceptre broken, and their sword in rust,
 Have yielded to the stranger : empty halls,
 Thin streets, and foreign aspects, such as must
 Too oft remind her who and what enthral,
 Have flung a desolate cloud o’er Venice’ lovely walls. 135

When Athens’ armies fell at Syracuse,
 And fetter’d thousands bore the yoke of war,
 Redemption rose up in the Attic Muse,
 Her voice their only ransom from afar :
 See ! as they chant the tragic hymn, the car 140
 Of the o’ermaster’d victor stops, the reins
 Fall from his hands, his idle scimitar
 Starts from its belt—he rends his captive’s chains,
 And bids him thank the bard for freedom and his strains.

Thus, Venice, if no stronger claim were thine, 145
 Were all thy proud historic deeds forgot,
 Thy choral memory of the Bard divine,
 Thy love of Tasso, should have cut the knot
 Which ties thee to thy tyrants ; and thy lot

Is shameful to the nations,—most of all, 150
 Albion ! to thee : the Ocean queen should not
 Abandon Ocean's children ; in the fall
 Of Venice think of thine, despite thy watery wall.

I loved her from my boyhood ; she to me
 Was as a fairy city of the heart, 155
 Rising like water-columns from the sea,
 Of joy the sojourn, and of wealth the mart ;
 And Otway, Radcliffe, Schiller, Shakespeare's art,
 Had stamp'd her image in me, and even so,
 Although I found her thus, we did not part ; 160
 Perchance even dearer in her day of woe,
 Than when she was a boast, a marvel, and a show.

I can repeople with the past—and of
 The present there is still for eye and thought,
 And meditation chasten'd down, enough ; 165
 And more, it may be, than I hoped or sought ;
 And of the happiest moments which were wrought
 Within the web of my existence, some
 From thee, fair Venice ! have their colours caught :
 There are some feelings Time cannot benumb, 170
 Nor Torture shake, or mine would now be cold and dumb.

But from their nature will the tannen grow
 Loftiest on loftiest and least shelter'd rocks,
 Rooted in barrenness, where nought below
 Of soil supports them 'gainst the Alpine shocks 175
 Of eddying storms ; yet springs the trunk, and mocks
 The howling tempest, till its height and frame
 Are worthy of the mountains from whose blocks
 Of bleak, gray granite into life it came,
 And grew a giant tree ;—the mind may grow the same. 180

Existence may be borne, and the deep root
 Of life and sufferance make its firm abode
 In bare and desolated bosoms : mute
 The camel labours with the heaviest load,
 And the wolf dies in silence,—not bestow'd 185
 In vain should such example be ; if they,
 Things of ignoble or of savage mood,
 Endure and shrink not, we of nobler clay
 May temper it to bear,—it is but for a day.

All suffering doth destroy, or is destroy'd, 190
 Even by the sufferer ; and, in each event,
 Ends : Some, with hope replenish'd and rebuoy'd,
 Return to whence they came—with like intent,
 And weave their web again ; some, bow'd and bent,
 Wax gray and ghastly, withering ere their time, 195
 And perish with the reed on which they leant ;
 Some seek devotion, toil, war, good or crime,
 According as their souls were form'd to sink or climb.

But ever and anon of griefs subdued
 There comes a token like a scorpion's sting, 200
 Scarce seen, but with fresh bitterness imbued ;
 And slight withal may be the things which bring
 Back on the heart the weight which it would fling
 Aside for ever : it may be a sound—
 A tone of music—summer's eve—or spring— 205
 A flower—the wind—the ocean—which shall wound,
 Striking the electric chain wherewith we are darkly bound ;

And how and why we know not, nor can trace
 Home to its cloud this lightning of the mind,
 But feel the shock renew'd, nor can efface 210
 The blight and blackening which it leaves behind,

Which out of things familiar, undesign'd,
 When least we deem of such, calls up to view
 The spectres whom no exorcism can bind,—
 The cold, the changed, perchance the dead—anew, 215
 The mourn'd, the loved, the lost—too many!—yet how few!

But my soul wanders; I demand it back
 To meditate amongst decay, and stand
 A ruin amidst ruins; there to track
 Fall'n states and buried greatness, o'er a land 220
 Which *was* the mightiest in its old command,
 And *is* the loveliest, and must ever be
 The master-mould of Nature's heavenly hand;
 Wherein were cast the heroic and the free,
 The beautiful, the brave, the lords of earth and sea, 225

The commonwealth of kings, the men of Rome!
 And even since, and now, fair Italy!
 Thou art the garden of the world, the home
 Of all Art yields, and Nature can decree;
 Even in thy desert, what is like to thee? 230
 Thy very weeds are beautiful, thy waste
 More rich than other climes' fertility;
 Thy wreck a glory, and thy ruin graced
 With an immaculate charm which cannot be defaced.

The moon is up, and yet it is not night; 235
 Sunset divides the sky with her; a sea
 Of glory streams along the Alpine height
 Of blue Friuli's mountains; Heaven is free
 From clouds, but of all colours seems to be,—
 Melted to one vast Iris of the West,— 240
 Where the Day joins the past Eternity,
 While, on the other hand, meek Dian's crest
 Floats through the azure air, an island of the blest!

A single star is at her side, and reigns
 With her o'er half the lovely heaven ; but still 245
 Yon sunny sea heaves brightly, and remains
 Roll'd o'er the peak of the far Rhaetian hill,
 As Day and Night contending were, until
 Nature reclaim'd her order :—gently flows
 The deep-dyed Brenta,—where their hues instil 250
 The odorous purple of a new-born rose,
 Which streams upon her stream, and glass'd within it glows,

Fill'd with the face of heaven, which, from afar,
 Comes down upon the waters ; all its hues,
 From the rich sunset to the rising star, 255
 Their magical variety diffuse :
 And now they change ; a paler shadow strews
 Its mantle o'er the mountains ; parting day
 Dies like the dolphin, whom each pang imbues
 With a new colour as it gasps away, 260
 The last still loveliest,—till—'t is gone—and all is gray.

There is a tomb in Arqua ;—rear'd in air,
 Pillar'd in their sarcophagus, repose
 The bones of Laura's lover : here repair
 Many familiar with his well-sung woes, 265
 The pilgrims of his genius. He arose
 To raise a language, and his land reclaim
 From the dull yoke of her barbaric foes :
 Watering the tree which bears his lady's name
 With his melodious tears, he gave himself to fame. 270

They keep his dust in Arqua, where he died ;
 The mountain-village where his latter days
 Went down the vale of years ; and 't is their pride—
 An honest pride—and let it be their praise,
 To offer to the passing stranger's gaze 275

His mansion and his sepulchre ; both plain
 And venerably simple, such as raise
 A feeling more accordant with his strain
 Than if a pyramid form'd his monumental fane.

And the soft quiet hamlet where he dwelt 280
 Is one of that complexion which seems made
 For those who their mortality have felt,
 And sought a refuge from their hopes decay'd
 In the deep umbrage of a green hill's shade,
 Which shows a distant prospect far away 285
 Of busy cities, now in vain display'd,
 For they can lure no further ; and the ray
 Of a bright sun can make sufficient holiday,

Developing the mountains, leaves, and flowers,
 And shining in the brawling brook, where-by 290
 Clear as its current, glide the sauntering hours
 With a calm languor, which, though to the eye
 Idlesse it seem, hath its morality.
 If from society we learn to live,
 'T is solitude should teach us how to die ; 295
 It hath no flatterers ; vanity can give
 No hollow aid ; alone—man with his God must strive :

Or, it may be, with demons, who impair
 The strength of better thoughts, and seek their prey
 In melancholy bosoms, such as were 300
 Of moody texture from their earliest day,
 And loved to dwell in darkness and dismay,
 Deeming themselves predestined to a doom
 Which is not of the pangs that pass away ;
 Making the sun like blood, the earth a tomb, 305
 The tomb a hell, and hell itself a murkier gloom.

Ferrara ! in thy wide and grass-grown streets,
 Whose symmetry was not for solitude,
 There seems as 't were a curse upon the seats
 Of former sovereigns, and the antique brood 310
 Of Este, which for many an age made good
 Its strength within thy walls, and was of yore
 Patron or tyrant, as the changing mood
 Of petty power impell'd, of those who wore
 The wreath which Dante's brow alone had worn before. 315

And Tasso is their glory and their shame.
 Hark to his strain ! and then survey his cell !
 And see how dearly earn'd Torquato's fame,
 And where Alfonso bade his poet dwell :
 The miserable despot could not quell 320
 The insulted mind he sought to quench, and blend
 With the surrounding maniacs, in the hell
 Where he had plunged it. Glory without end
 Scatter'd the clouds away ; and on that name attend

The tears and praises of all time ; while thine 325
 Would rot in its oblivion—in the sink
 Of worthless dust, which from thy boasted line
 Is shaken into nothing—but the link
 Thou formest in his fortunes bids us think
 Of thy poor malice, naming thee with scorn : 330
 Alfonso ! how thy ducal pageants shrink
 From thee ! if in another station born,
 Scarce fit to be the slave of him thou mad'st to mourn :

Thou ! form'd to eat, and be despised, and die,
 Even as the beasts that perish, save that thou 335
 Hadst a more splendid trough and wider sty :
He ! with a glory round his furrow'd brow,

Which emanated then, and dazzles now,
 In face of all his foes, the Cruscan quire,
 And Boileau, whose rash envy could allow 340
 No strain which shamed his country's creaking lyre,
 That whetstone of the teeth—monotony in wire!

Peace to Torquato's injured shade! 't was his
 In life and death to be the mark where Wrong
 Aim'd with her poison'd arrows,—but to miss. 345
 Oh, victor unsurpass'd in modern song!
 Each year brings forth its millions; but how long
 The tide of generations shall roll on,
 And not the whole combined and countless throng
 Compose a mind like thine? though all in one 350
 Condensed their scatter'd rays, they would not form a sun.

Great as thou art, yet parallel'd by those,
 Thy countrymen, before thee born to shine,
 The Bards of Hell and Chivalry: first rose
 The Tuscan father's comedy divine; 355
 Then, not unequal to the Florentine,
 The southern Scott, the minstrel who call'd forth
 A new creation with his magic line,
 And, like the Ariosto of the North,
 Sang ladye-love and war, romance and knightly worth. 360

The lightning rent from Ariosto's bust
 The iron crown of laurel's mimic'd leaves;
 Nor was the ominous element unjust,
 For the true laurel-wreath which Glory weaves
 Is of the tree no bolt of thunder cleaves, 365
 And the false semblance but disgraced his brow;
 Yet still, if fondly Superstition grieves,
 Know, that the lightning sanctifies below
 Whate'er it strikes;—yon head is doubly sacred now.

Italia ! oh Italia ! thou who hast 370
The fatal gift of beauty, which became
A funeral dower of present woes and past,
On thy sweet brow is sorrow plough'd by shame,
And annals graved in characters of flame.
Oh, God ! that thou wert in thy nakedness 375
Less lovely or more powerful, and couldst claim
Thy right, and awe the robbers back, who press
To shed thy blood, and drink the tears of thy distress ;

Then might'st thou more appal ; or, less desired,
Be homely and be peaceful, undeplord 380
For thy destructive charms ; then, still untired,
Would not be seen the armed torrents pour'd
Down the deep Alps ; nor would the hostile horde
Of many-nation'd spoilers from the Po
Quaff blood and water ; nor the stranger's sword 385
Be thy sad weapon of defence, and so,
Victor or vanquish'd, thou the slave of friend or foe.

Wandering in youth, I traced the path of him,
The Roman friend of Rome's least-mortal mind,
The friend of Tully : as my bark did skim 390
The bright blue waters with a fanning wind,
Came Megara before me, and behind
Ægina lay, Piræus on the right,
And Corinth on the left ; I lay reclined
Along the prow, and saw all these unite 395
In ruin, even as he had seen the desolate sight ;

For Time hath not rebuilt them, but uprear'd
Barbaric dwellings on their shatter'd site,
Which only make more mourn'd and more endear'd
The few last rays of their far-scatter'd light, 400
And the crush'd relics of their vanish'd might.

The Roman saw these tombs in his own age,
These sepulchres of cities, which excite
Sad wonder, and his yet surviving page
The moral lesson bears, drawn from such pilgrimage. 405

That page is now before me, and on mine
His country's ruin added to the mass
Of perish'd states he mourn'd in their decline,
And I in desolation : all that *was*
Of then destruction *is* ; and now, alas ! 410
Rome—Rome imperial, bows her to the storm,
In the same dust and blackness, and we pass
The skeleton of her Titanic form,
Wrecks of another world, whose ashes still are warm.

Yet, Italy ! through every other land 415
Thy wrongs should ring, and shall, from side to side ;
Mother of Arts ! as once of arms ; thy hand
Was then our guardian, and is still our guide ;
Parent of our religion ! whom the wide
Nations have knelt to for the keys of heaven ! 420
Europe, repentant of her parricide,
Shall yet redeem thee, and, all backward driven,
Roll the barbarian tide, and sue to be forgiven.

But Arno wins us to the fair white walls,
Where the Etrurian Athens claims and keeps 425
A softer feeling for her fairy halls.
Girt by her theatre of hills, she reaps
Her corn, and wine, and oil, and Plenty leaps
To laughing life, with her redundant horn.
Along the banks where smiling Arno sweeps 430
Was modern Luxury of Commerce born,
And buried Learning rose, redeem'd to a new morn.

There, too, the Goddess loves in stone, and fills
 The air around with beauty ; we inhale
 The ambrosial aspect, which, beheld, instils 435
 Part of its immortality ; the veil
 Of heaven is half undrawn ; within the pale
 We stand, and in that form and face behold
 What Mind can make, when Nature's self would fail ;
 And to the fond idolaters of old 440
 Envy the innate flash which such a soul could mould :

We gaze and turn away, and know not where,
 Dazzled and drunk with beauty, till the heart
 Reels with its fulness ; there—for ever there—
 Chain'd to the chariot of triumphal Art, 445
 We stand as captives, and would not depart.
 Away !—there need no words nor terms precise,
 The paltry jargon of the marble mart,
 Where Pedantry gulls Folly—we have eyes :
 Blood, pulse, and breast confirm the Dardan Shepherd's prize.

Appear'dst thou not to Paris in this guise ? 451
 Or to more deeply blest Anchises ? or,
 In all thy perfect goddess-ship, when lies
 Before thee thy own vanquished Lord of War ?
 And gazing in thy face as toward a star, 455
 Laid on thy lap, his eyes to thee upturn,
 Feeding on thy sweet cheek ! while thy lips are
 With lava kisses melting while they burn,
 Shower'd on his eyelids, brow, and mouth, as from an urn ?

Glowing, and circumfused in speechless love, 460
 Their full divinity inadequate
 That feeling to express, or to improve,
 The gods become as mortals, and man's fate
 Has moments like their brightest ; but the weight

Of earth recoils upon us ;—let it go ! 465
We can recall such visions, and create,
From what has been, or might be, things which grow
Into thy statue's form, and look like gods below.

I leave to learned fingers and wise hands,
The artist and his ape, to teach and tell 470
How well his connoisseurship understands
The graceful bend, and the voluptuous swell :
Let these describe the undescribable :
I would not their vile breath should crisp the stream
Wherein that image shall for ever dwell ; 475
The unruffled mirror of the loveliest dream
That ever left the sky on the deep soul to beam.

In Santa Croce's holy precincts lie
Ashes which make it holier, dust which is
Even in itself an immortality, 480
Though there were nothing save the past, and this,
The particle of those sublimities
Which have relapsed to chaos : here repose
Angelo's, Alfieri's bones, and his,
The starry Galileo, with his woes ; 485
Here Machiavelli's earth return'd to whence it rose.

These are four minds, which, like the elements,
Might furnish forth creation :—Italy !
Time, which hath wrong'd thee with ten thousand rents
Of thine imperial garment, shall deny, 490
And hath denied, to every other sky,
Spirits which soar from ruin : thy decay
Is still impregnate with divinity,
Which gilds it with revivifying ray ;
Such as the great of yore, Canova is to-day. 495

But where repose the all Etruscan three—
 Dante, and Petrarch, and, scarce less than they,
 The Bard of Prose, creative spirit ! he
 Of the Hundred Tales of love—where did they lay
 Their bones, distinguish'd from our common clay 500
 In death as life ? Are they resolved to dust,
 And have their country's marbles nought to say ?
 Could not her quarries furnish forth one bust ?
 Did they not to her breast their filial earth entrust ?

Ungrateful Florence ! Dante sleeps afar, 505
 Like Scipio, buried by the upbraiding shore :
 Thy factions, in their worse than civil war,
 Proscribed the bard whose name for evermore
 Their children's children would in vain adore
 With the remorse of ages ; and the crown 510
 Which Petrarch's laureate brow supremely wore,
 Upon a far and foreign soil had grown,
 His life, his fame, his grave, though rifled—not thine own.

Boccaccio to his parent earth bequeath'd
 His dust,—and lies it not her great among, 515
 With many a sweet and solemn requiem breathed
 O'er him who form'd the Tuscan's siren tongue ?
 That music in itself, whose sounds are song,
 The poetry of speech ? No ;—even his tomb
 Uptorn, must bear the hyæna bigot's wrong, 520
 No more amidst the meaner dead find room,
 Nor claim a passing sigh, because it told for *whom* !

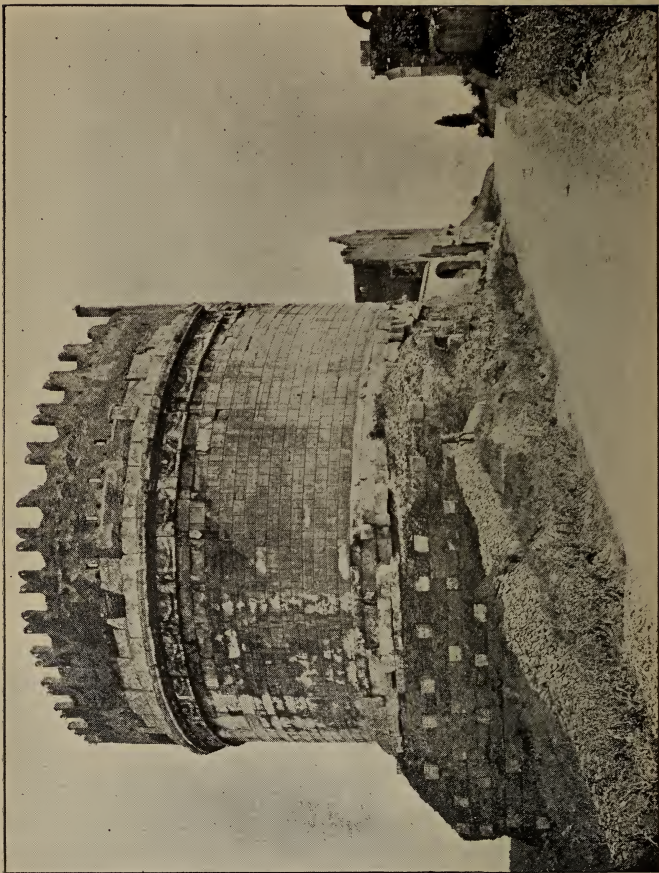
And Santa Croce wants their mighty dust ;
 Yet for this want more noted, as of yore
 The Cæsar's pageant, shorn of Brutus' bust, 525
 Did but of Rome's best Son remind her more :
 Happier Ravenna ! on thy hoary shore,

Fortress of falling empire ! honour'd sleeps
 The immortal exile ;—Arqua, too, her store
 Of tuneful relics proudly claims and keeps, 530
 While Florence vainly begs her banish'd dead and weeps.

What is her pyramid of precious stones ?
 Of porphyry, jasper, agate, and all hues
 Of gem and marble, to encrust the bones
 Of merchant-dukes ? the momentary dew 535
 Which, sparkling to the twilight stars, infuse
 Freshness in the green turf that wraps the dead,
 Whose names are mausoleums of the Muse,
 Are gently prest with far more reverent tread
 Than ever paced the slab which paves the princely head. 540

There be more things to greet the heart and eyes
 In Arno's dome of Art's most princely shrine,
 Where Sculpture with her rainbow sister vies ;
 There be more marvels yet—but not for mine ;
 For I have been accustom'd to entwine 545
 My thoughts with Nature rather in the fields,
 Than Art in galleries : though a work divine
 Calls for my spirit's homage, yet it yields
 Less than it feels, because the weapon which it wields

Is of another temper, and I roam 550
 By Thrasimene's lake, in the defiles
 Fatal to Roman rashness, more at home ;
 For there the Carthaginian's warlike wiles
 Come back before me, as his skill beguiles
 The host between the mountains and the shore, 555
 Where Courage falls in her despairing files,
 And torrents, swoll'n to rivers with their gore,
 Reek through the sultry plain, with legions scatter'd o'er,



Tomb of Cecilia Metella.

Like to a forest fell'd by mountain winds ;
 And such the storm of battle on this day, 560
 And such the frenzy, whose convulsion blinds
 To all save carnage, that, beneath the fray,
 An earthquake reel'd unheededly away !
 None felt stern Nature rocking at his feet,
 And yawning forth a grave for those who lay 565
 Upon their bucklers for a winding-sheet ;
 Such is the absorbing hate when warring nations meet !

The Earth to them was as a rolling bark
 Which bore them to Eternity ; they saw
 The Ocean round, but had no time to mark 570
 The motions of their vessel ; Nature's law,
 In them suspended, reck'd not of the awe
 Which reigns when mountains tremble, and the birds
 Plunge in the clouds for refuge, and withdraw
 From their down-toppling nests ; and bellowing herds 575
 Stumble o'er heaving plains, and man's dread hath no words.

Far other scene is Thrasimene now ;
 Her lake a sheet of silver, and her plain
 Rent by no ravage save the gentle plough ;
 Her aged trees rise thick as once the slain 580
 Lay where their roots are ; but a brook hath ta'en—
 A little rill of scanty stream and bed—
 A name of blood from that day's sanguine rain ;
 And Sanguinetto tells ye where the dead
 Made the earth wet, and turn'd the unwilling waters red. 585

But thou, Clitumnus ! in thy sweetest wave
 Of the most living crystal that was e'er
 The haunt of river nymph, to gaze and lave
 Her limbs where nothing hid them, thou dost rear
 Thy grassy banks whereon the milk-white steer 590

Grazes ; the purest god of gentle waters !
 And most serene of aspect, and most clear ;
 Surely that stream was unprofaned by slaughters,
 A mirror and a bath for Beauty's youngest daughters !

And on thy happy shore a temple still, 595
 Of small and delicate proportion, keeps,
 Upon a mild declivity of hill,
 Its memory of thee ; beneath it sweeps
 Thy current's calmness ; oft from out it leaps
 The finny darter with the glittering scales, 600
 Who dwells and revels in thy glassy deeps ;
 While, chance, some scatter'd water-lily sails
 Down where the shallower wave still tells its bubbling tales.

Pass not unblest the Genius of the place !
 If through the air a zephyr more serene 605
 Win to the brow, 't is his ; and if ye trace
 Along his margin a more eloquent green,
 If on the heart the freshness of the scene
 Sprinkle its coolness, and from the dry dust
 Of weary life a moment lave it clean 610
 With Nature's baptism,—'t is to him ye must
 Pay orisons for this suspension of disgust.

The roar of waters !—from the headlong height
 Velino cleaves the wave-worn precipice ;
 The fall of waters ! rapid as the light 615
 The flashing mass foams shaking the abyss ;
 The hell of waters ! where they howl and hiss,
 And boil in endless torture ; while the sweat
 Of their great agony, wrung out from this
 Their Phlegethon, curls round the rocks of jet 620
 That guard the gulf around, in pitiless horror set,

And mounts in spray the skies, and thence again
 Returns in an unceasing shower, which round,
 With its unemptied cloud of gentle rain,
 Is an eternal April to the ground, 625
 Making it all one emerald :—how profound
 The gulf ! and how the giant element
 From rock to rock leaps with delirious bound,
 Crushing the cliffs, which, downward worn and rent
 With his fierce footsteps, yield in chasms a fearful vent. 630

To the broad column which rolls on, and shows
 More like the fountain of an infant sea
 Torn from the womb of mountains by the throes
 Of a new world, than only thus to be
 Parent of rivers, which flow gushingly, 635
 With many windings, through the vale :—Look back !
 Lo ! where it comes like an eternity,
 As if to sweep down all things in its track,
 Charming the eye with dread,—a matchless cataract,

Horribly beautiful ! but on the verge, 640
 From side to side, beneath the glittering morn,
 An Iris sits, amidst the infernal surge,
 Like Hope upon a death-bed, and, unworn
 Its steady dyes, while all around is torn
 By the distracted waters, bears serene 645
 Its brilliant hues with all their beams unshorn :
 Resembling, 'mid the torture of the scene,
 Love watching Madness with unalterable mien.

Once more upon the woody Apennine,
 The infant Alps, which—had I not before 650
 Gazed on their mightier parents, where the pine
 Sits on more shaggy summits, and where roar
 The thundering lauwine—might be worshipp'd more ;

But I have seen the soaring Jungfrau rear
Her never-trodden snow, and seen the hoar 655
Glaciers of bleak Mont Blanc both far and near,
And in Chimari heard the thunder-hills of fear,

Th' Acroceraunian mountains of old name ;
And on Parnassus seen the eagles fly
Like spirits of the spot, as 't were for fame, 660
For still they soared unutterably high :
I've look'd on Ida with a Trojan's eye ;
Athos, Olympus, Ætna, Atlas, made
These hills seem things of lesser dignity,
All, save the lone Soracte's height, display'd 665
Not *now* in snow, which asks the lyric Roman's aid

For our remembrance, and from out the plain
Heaves like a long-swept wave about to break,
And on the curl hangs pausing : not in vain
May he, who will, his recollections rake, 670
And quote in classic raptures, and awake
The hills with Latian echoes ; I abhorrd
Too much, to conquer for the poet's sake,
The drill'd dull lesson, forced down word by word
In my repugnant youth, with pleasure to record 675

Aught that recalls the daily drug which turn'd
My sickening memory ; and, though Time hath taught
My mind to meditate what then it learn'd,
Yet such the fix'd inveteracy wrought
By the impatience of my early thought, 680
That, with the freshness wearing out before
My mind could relish what it might have sought,
If free to choose, I cannot now restore
Its health ; but what it then detested, still abhor.

Then farewell, Horace ; whom I hated so, 685
 Not for thy faults, but mine ; it is a curse
 To understand, not feel thy lyric flow,
 To comprehend, but never love thy verse :
 Although no deeper Moralist rehearse
 Our little life, nor Bard prescribe his art, 690
 Nor livelier Satirist the conscience pierce,
 Awakening without wounding the touch'd heart,
 Yet fare thee well—upon Soracte's ridge we part.

Oh Rome ! my country ! city of the soul !
 The orphans of the heart must turn to thee, 695
 Lone mother of dead empires ! and control
 In their shut breasts their petty misery.
 What are our woes and sufferance ? Come and see
 The cypress, hear the owl, and plod your way
 O'er steps of broken thrones and temples, Ye ! 700
 Whose agonies are evils of a day—
 A world is at our feet as fragile as our clay.

The Niobe of nations ! there she stands,
 Childless and crownless, in her voiceless woe ;
 An empty urn within her wither'd hands, 705
 Whose holy dust was scatter'd long ago ;
 The Scipios' tomb contains no ashes now ;
 The very sepulchres lie tenantless
 Of their heroic dwellers : dost thou flow,
 Old Tiber ! through a marble wilderness ? 710
 Rise, with thy yellow waves, and mantle her distress.

The Goth, the Christian, Time, War, Flood, and Fire,
 Have dealt upon the seven-hill'd city's pride ;
 She saw her glories star by star expire,
 And up the steep barbarian monarchs ride, 715
 Where the car climb'd the Capitol ; far and wide

Temple and tower went down, nor left a site :
 Chaos of ruins ! who shall trace the void,
 O'er the dim fragments cast a lunar light,
 And say, 'here was, or is,' where all is doubly night ? 720

The double night of ages, and of her,
 Night's daughter, Ignorance, hath wrapt and wrap
 All round us ; we but feel our way to err :
 The ocean hath its chart, the stars their map,
 And Knowledge spreads them on her ample lap ; 725
 But Rome is as the desert, where we steer
 Stumbling o'er recollections ; now we clap
 Our hands, and cry "Eureka !" it is clear—
 When but some false mirage of ruin rises near.

Alas ! the lofty city ! and alas ! 730
 The trebly hundred triumphs ! and the day
 When Brutus made the dagger's edge surpass
 The conqueror's sword in bearing fame away !
 Alas, for Tully's voice, and Virgil's lay,
 And Livy's pictured page !—but these shall be 735
 Her resurrection ; all beside—decay.
 Alas, for Earth, for never shall we see
 That brightness in her eye she bore when Rome was free !

Oh thou, whose chariot roll'd on Fortune's wheel,
 Triumphant Sylla ! Thou, who didst subdue 740
 Thy country's foes ere thou wouldst pause to feel
 The wrath of thy own wrongs, or reap the due
 Of hoarded vengeance till thine eagles flew
 O'er prostrate Asia ;—thou, who with thy frown
 Annihilated senates—Roman, too, 745
 With all thy vices, for thou didst lay down
 With an atoning smile a more than earthly crown—

The dictatorial wreath—couldst thou divine
To what would one day dwindle that which made
Thee more than mortal? and that so supine 750
By aught than Romans Rome should thus be laid?
She who was named Eternal, and array'd
Her warriors but to conquer—she who veil'd
Earth with her haughty shadow, and display'd,
Until the o'er-canopied horizon fail'd, 755
Her rushing wings—Oh! she who was Almighty hail'd!

Sylla was first of victors; but our own,
The sagest of usurpers, Cromwell!—he
Too swept off senates while he hew'd the throne
Down to a block—immortal rebel! See 760
What crimes it costs to be a moment free,
And famous through all ages! but beneath
His fate the moral lurks of destiny;
His day of double victory and death
Beheld him win two realms, and, happier, yield his breath. 765

The third of the same moon whose former course
Had all but crown'd him, on the self-same day
Deposed him gently from his throne of force,
And laid him with the earth's preceding clay.
And show'd not Fortune thus how fame and sway, 770
And all we deem delightful, and consume
Our souls to compass through each arduous way,
Are in her eyes less happy than the tomb?
Were they but so in man's, how different were his doom!

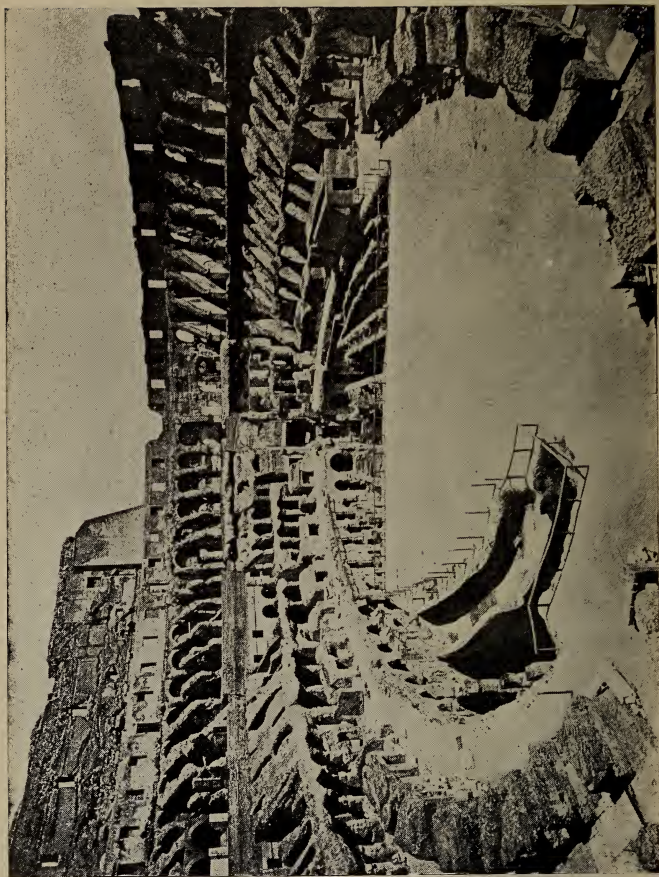
And thou, dread statue! yet existent in 775
The austere form of naked majesty,
Thou who beheldest, 'mid the assassins' din,
At thy bathed base the bloody Cæsar lie,
Folding his robe in dying dignity,

An offering to thine altar from the queen 780
Of gods and men, great Nemesis ! did he die,
And thou, too, perish, Pompey ? have ye been
Victors of countless kings, or puppets of a scene ?

And thou, the thunder-stricken nurse of Rome !
She-wolf ! whose brazen-imaged dugs impart 785
The milk of conquest yet within the dome
Where, as a monument of antique art,
Thou standest :—Mother of the mighty heart,
Which the great founder suck'd from thy wild teat,
Scorch'd by the Roman Jove's ethereal dart, 790
And thy limbs black with lightning—dost thou yet
Guard thine immortal cubs, nor thy fond charge forget ?

Thou dost ; but all thy foster-babes are dead—
The men of iron : and the world hath rear'd
Cities from out their sepulchres : men bled 795
In imitation of the things they fear'd,
And fought and conquer'd, and the same course steer'd,
At apish distance ; but as yet none have,
Nor could, the same supremacy have near'd,
Save one vain man, who is not in the grave, 800
But, vanquish'd by himself, to his own slaves a slave—

The fool of false dominion—and a kind
Of bastard Cæsar, following him of old
With steps unequal ; for the Roman's mind
Was modell'd in a less terrestrial mould, 805
With passions fiercer, yet a judgment cold,
And an immortal instinct which redeem'd
The frailties of a heart so soft, yet bold,
Alcides with the distaff now he seem'd
At Cleopatra's feet,—and now himself he beam'd, 810



Interior of the Coliseum.

And came—and saw—and conquer'd! But the man
 Who would have tamed his eagles down to flee,
 Like a train'd falcon, in the Gallic van,
 Which he, in sooth, long led to victory,
 With a deaf heart which never seem'd to be 815
 A listener to itself, was strangely framed;
 With but one weakest weakness—vanity,
 Coquettish in ambition, still he aim'd—
 At what? can he avouch, or answer what he claim'd?

And would be all or nothing—nor could wait 820
 For the sure grave to level him; few years
 Had fix'd him with the Cæsars in his fate,
 On whom we tread: For *this* the conqueror rears
 The arch of triumph! and for this the tears
 And blood of earth flow on as they have flow'd, 825
 An universal deluge, which appears
 Without an ark for wretched man's abode,
 And ebbs but to reflow!—Renew thy rainbow, God!

What from this barren being do we reap?
 Our senses narrow, and our reason frail, 830
 Life short, and truth a gem which loves the deep,
 And all things weigh'd in custom's falsest scale;
 Opinion an omnipotence,—whose veil
 Mantles the earth with darkness, until right
 And wrong are accidents, and men grow pale 835
 Lest their own judgments should become too bright,
 And their free thoughts be crimes, and earth have too much
 light.

And thus they plod in sluggish misery,
 Rotting from sire to son, and age to age,
 Proud of their trampled nature, and so die, 840
 Bequeathing their hereditary rage

To the new race of inborn slaves, who wage
War for their chains, and rather than be free,
Bleed gladiator-like, and still engage
Within the same arena where they see 845
Their fellows fall before, like leaves of the same tree.

I speak not of men's creeds—they rest between
Man and his Maker—but of things allow'd,
Averr'd, and known, and daily, hourly seen—
The yoke that is upon us doubly bow'd, 850
And the intent of tyranny avow'd,
The edict of Earth's rulers, who are grown
The apes of him who humbled once the proud,
And shook them from their slumbers on the throne :
Too glorious, were this all his mighty arm had done. 855

Can tyrants but by tyrants conquer'd be,
And Freedom find no champion and no child
Such as Columbia saw arise when she
Sprung forth a Pallas, arm'd and undefiled ?
Or must such minds be nourish'd in the wild, 860
Deep in the unpruned forest, 'midst the roar
Of cataracts, where nursing nature smiled
On infant Washington ? Has Earth no more
Such seeds within her breast, or Europe no such shore ?

But France got drunk with blood to vomit crime, 865
And fatal have her Saturnalia been
To Freedom's cause, in every age and clime ;
Because the deadly days which we have seen,
And vile Ambition, that built up between
Man and his hopes an adamantine wall, 870
And the base pageant last upon the scene,
Are grown the pretext for the eternal thrall
Which nips life's tree, and dooms man's worst—his second fall.

Yet, Freedom ! yet thy banner, torn, but flying,
 Streams like the thunder-storm *against* the wind ; 875
 Thy trumpet voice, though broken now and dying,
 The loudest still the tempest leaves behind ;
 Thy tree hath lost its blossoms, and the rind,
 Chopp'd by the axe, looks rough and little worth,
 But the sap lasts,—and still the seed we find 880
 Sown deep, even in the bosom of the North ;
 So shall a better spring less bitter fruit bring forth.

There is a stern round tower of other days,
 Firm as a fortress, with its fence of stone,
 Such as an army's baffled strength delays, 885
 Standing with half its battlements alone,
 And with two thousand years of ivy grown,
 The garland of eternity, where wave
 The green leaves over all by time o'erthrown ;—
 What was this tower of strength ? within its cave 890
 What treasure lay so lock'd, so hid ?—A woman's grave.

But who was she, the lady of the dead,
 Tomb'd in a palace ? Was she chaste and fair ?
 Worthy a king's, or more—a Roman's bed ?
 What race of chiefs and heroes did she bear ? 895
 What daughter of her beauties was the heir ?
 How lived, how loved, how died she ? Was she not
 So honour'd—and conspicuously there,
 Where meaner relics must not dare to rot,
 Placed to commemorate a more than mortal lot ? 900

Was she as those who love their lords, or they
 Who love the lords of others ? such have been
 Even in the olden time, Rome's annals say.
 Was she a matron of Cornelia's mien,
 Or the light air of Egypt's graceful queen, 905

Profuse of joy—or 'gainst it did she war
 Inveterate in virtue? Did she lean
 To the soft side of the heart, or wisely bar
 Love from amongst her griefs?—for such the affections are.

Perchance she died in youth : it may be, bow'd 910
 With woes far heavier than the ponderous tomb
 That weigh'd upon her gentle dust, a cloud
 Might gather o'er her beauty, and a gloom
 In her dark eye, prophetic of the doom
 Heaven gives its favourites—early death ; yet shed 915
 A sunset charm around her, and illume
 With hectic light, the Hesperus of the dead,
 Of her consuming cheek the autumnal leaf-like red.

Perchance she died in age—surviving all,
 Charms, kindred, children—with the silver gray 920
 On her long tresses, which might yet recall,
 It may be, still a something of the day
 When they were braided, and her proud array
 And lovely form were envied, praised, and eyed
 By Rome—But whither would Conjecture stray ? 925
 Thus much alone we know—Metella died,
 The wealthiest Roman's wife : Behold his love or pride !

I know not why—but standing thus by thee
 It seems as if I had thine inmate known,
 Thou Tomb ! and other days come back on me 930
 With recollected music, though the tone
 Is changed and solemn, like the cloudy groan
 Of dying thunder on the distant wind ;
 Yet could I seat me by this ivied stone
 Till I had bodied forth the heated mind 935
 Forms from the floating wreck which Ruin leaves behind ;

And from the planks, far shatter'd o'er the rocks,
 Built me a little bark of hope, once more
 To battle with the ocean and the shocks
 Of the loud breakers, and the ceaseless roar 940
 Which rushes on the solitary shore
 Where all lies founder'd that was ever dear :
 But could I gather from the wave-worn store
 Enough for my rude boat, where should I steer ?
 There woos no home, nor hope, nor life, save what is here.

Then let the winds howl on ! their harmony 946
 Shall henceforth be my music, and the night
 The sound shall temper with the owlets' cry,
 As I now hear them, in the fading light
 Dim o'er the bird of darkness' native site, 950
 Answering each other on the Palatine,
 With their large eyes, all glistening gray and bright,
 And sailing pinions.—Upon such a shrine
 What are our petty griefs ?—let me not number mine.

Cypress and ivy, weed and wallflower grown 955
 Matted and mass'd together, hillocks heap'd
 On what were chambers, arch crush'd, column strown
 In fragments, choked up vaults, and frescos steep'd
 In subterranean damps, where the owl peep'd,
 Deeming it midnight :—Temples, baths, or halls ? 960
 Pronounce who can ; for all that Learning reap'd
 From her research hath been, that these are walls—
 Behold the Imperial Mount ! 't is thus the mighty falls.

There is the moral of all human tales ;
 'T is but the same rehearsal of the past, 965
 First Freedom, and then Glory—when that fails,
 Wealth, vice, corruption,—barbarism at last.
 And History, with all her volumes vast,

Hath but *one* page,—’t is better written here
 Where gorgeous Tyranny hath thus amass’d 970
 All treasures, all delights, that eye or ear,
 Heart, soul could seek, tongue ask—Away with words! draw
 near,

Admire, exult, despise, laugh, weep,—for here
 There is such matter for all feeling :—Man !
 Thou pendulum betwixt a smile and tear, 975
 Ages and realms are crowded in this span,
 This mountain, whose obliterated plan
 The pyramid of empires pinnacled,
 Of Glory’s gewgaws shining in the van
 Till the sun’s rays with added flame were filled ! 980
 Where are its golden roofs ? where those who dared to build ?

Tully was not so eloquent as thou,
 Thou nameless column with the buried base !
 What are the laurels of the Cæsar’s brow ?
 Crown me with ivy from his dwelling-place. 985
 Whose arch or pillar meets me in the face,
 Titus or Trajan’s ? No—’t is that of Time :
 Triumph, arch, pillar, all he doth displace
 Scoffing ; and apostolic statues climb
 To crush the imperial urn, whose ashes slept sublime, 990

Buried in air, the deep blue sky of Rome,
 And looking to the stars : they had contain’d
 A spirit which with these would find a home,
 The last of those who o’er the whole earth reign’d,
 The Roman globe, for after none sustain’d, 995
 But yielded back his conquests :—he was more
 Than a mere Alexander, and, unstain’d
 With household blood and wine, serenely wore
 His sovereign virtues—still we Trajan’s name adore.

Where is the rock of Triumph, the high place 1000
 Where Rome embraced her heroes? where the steep
 Tarpeian? fittest goal of Treason's race,
 The promontory whence the Traitor's Leap
 Cured all ambition. Did the conquerors heap
 Their spoils here? Yes; and in yon field below, 1005
 A thousand years of silenced factions sleep—
 The Forum, where the immortal accents glow,
 And still the eloquent air breathes—burns with Cicero!

The field of freedom, faction, fame, and blood :
 Here a proud people's passions were exhaled, 1010
 From the first hour of empire in the bud
 To that when further worlds to conquer fail'd ;
 But long before had freedom's face been veil'd,
 And Anarchy assumed her attributes ;
 Till every lawless soldier who assail'd 1015
 Trod on the trembling senate's slavish mutes,
 Or raised the venal voice of baser prostitutes.

Then turn we to her latest tribune's name,
 From her ten thousand tyrants turn to thee,
 Redeemer of dark centuries of shame— 1020
 The friend of Petrarch—hope of Italy—
 Rienzi ! last of Romans ! While the tree
 Of freedom's wither'd trunk puts forth a leaf,
 Even for thy tomb a garland let it be—
 The forum's champion, and the people's chief— 1025
 Her new-born Numa thou—with reign, alas ! too brief.

Egeria ! sweet creation of some heart
 Which found no mortal resting-place so fair
 As thine ideal breast ; whate'er thou art
 Or wert,—a young Aurora of the air, 1030
 The nympholepsy of some fond despair ;

Or, it might be, a beauty of the earth,
 Who found a more than common votary there
 Too much adoring ; whatsoe'er thy birth,
 Thou wert a beautiful thought, and softly bodied forth. 1035

The mosses of thy fountain still are sprinkled
 With thine Elysian water-drops ; the face
 Of thy cave-guarded spring with years unwrinkled,
 Reflects the meek-eyed genius of the place,
 Whose green, wild margin now no more erase 1040
 Art's works ; nor must the delicate waters sleep,
 Prison'd in marble ; bubbling from the base
 Of the cleft statue, with a gentle leap
 The rill runs o'er, and round, fern, flowers, and ivy creep,

Fantastically tangled : the green hills 1045
 Are clothed with early blossoms, through the grass
 The quick-eyed lizard rustles, and the bills
 Of summer-birds sing welcome as ye pass ;
 Flowers fresh in hue, and many in their class,
 Implore the pausing step, and with their dyes, 1050
 Dance in the soft breeze in a fairy mass ;
 The sweetness of the violet's deep blue eyes,
 Kiss'd by the breath of heaven, seems colour'd by its skies.

Here didst thou dwell, in this enchanted cover,
 Egeria ! thy all heavenly bosom beating 1055
 For the far footsteps of thy mortal lover ;
 The purple Midnight veil'd that mystic meeting
 With her most starry canopy, and seating
 Thyself by thine adorer, what befell ?
 This cave was surely shaped out for the greeting 1060
 Of an enamour'd Goddess, and the cell
 Haunted by holy Love—the earliest oracle !



The Dying Gladiator.

And didst thou not, thy breast to his replying,
 Blend a celestial with a human heart ;
 And Love, which dies as it was born, in sighing, 1065
 Share with immortal transports ? could thine art
 Make them indeed immortal, and impart
 The purity of heaven to earthly joys,
 Expel the venom and not blunt the dart—
 The dull satiety which all destroys— 1070
 And root from out the soul the deadly weed which cloy's ?

Alas ! our young affections run to waste,
 Or water but the desert ; whence arise
 But weeds of dark luxuriance, tares of haste,
 Rank at the core, though tempting to the eyes, 1075
 Flowers whose wild odours breathe but agonies,
 And trees whose gums are poisons ; such the plants
 Which spring beneath her steps as Passion flies
 O'er the world's wilderness, and vainly pants
 For some celestial fruit forbidden to our wants. 1080

Oh Love ! no habitant of earth thou art—
 An unseen seraph, we believe in thee,—
 A faith whose martyrs are the broken heart,—
 But never yet hath seen, nor e'er shall see
 The naked eye, thy form, as it should be ; 1085
 The mind hath made thee, as it peopled heaven,
 Even with its own desiring phantasy,
 And to a thought such shape and image given,
 As haunts the unquench'd soul—parch'd, wearied, wrung, and
 riven.

Of its own beauty is the mind diseased, 1090
 And fevers into false creation :—where,
 Where are the forms the sculptor's soul hath seiz'd ?
 In him alone. Can Nature show so fair ?

Where are the charms and virtues which we dare
 Conceive in boyhood and pursue as men, 1095
 The unreach'd Paradise of our despair,
 Which o'er-informs the pencil and the pen,
 And overpowers the page where it would bloom again ?

Who loves, raves—'t is youth's frenzy— but the cure
 Is bitterer still, as charm by charm unwinds 1100
 Which robed our idols, and we see too sure
 Nor worth nor beauty dwells from out the mind's
 Ideal shape of such ; yet still it binds
 The fatal spell, and still it draws us on,
 Reaping the whirlwind from the oft-sown winds ; 1105
 The stubborn heart, its alchemy begun,
 Seems ever near the prize—wealthiest when most undone.

We wither from our youth, we gasp away—
 Sick—sick ; unfound the boon, unslaked the thirst,
 Though to the last, in verge of our decay, 1110
 Some phantom lures, such as we sought at first—
 But all too late,—so are we doubly curst.
 Love, fame, ambition, avarice—'t is the same,
 Each idle, and all ill, and none the worst—
 For all are meteors with a different name, 1115
 And Death the sable smoke where vanishes the flame.

Few—none—find what they love or could have loved,
 Though accident, blind contact, and the strong
 Necessity of loving, have removed
 Antipathies—but to recur, ere long, 1120
 Envenom'd with irrevocable wrong ;
 And Circumstance, that unspiritual god
 And miscreator, makes and helps along
 Our coming evils with a crutch-like rod,
 Whose touch turns Hope to dust,—the dust we all have
 trod. 1125

Our life is a false nature : 't is not in
 The harmony of things,—this hard decree,
 This uneradicable taint of sin,
 This boundless upas, this all-blasting tree,
 Whose root is earth, whose leaves and branches be 1130
 The skies which rain their plagues on men like dew—
 Disease, death, bondage—all the woes we see,
 And worse, the woes we see not—which throb through
 The immedicable soul, with heart-aches ever new.

Yet let us ponder boldly—'t is a base 1135
 Abandonment of reason to resign
 Our right of thought—our last and only place
 Of refuge ; this, at least, shall still be mine :
 Though from our birth the faculty divine
 Is chain'd and tortured—cabin'd, cribb'd, confined, 1140
 And bred in darkness, lest the truth should shine
 Too brightly on the unprepared mind,
 The beam pours in, for time and skill will couch the blind.

Arches on arches ! as it were that Rome,
 Collecting the chief trophies of her line, 1145
 Would build up all her triumphs in one dome,
 Her Coliseum stands ; the moonbeams shine
 As 't were its natural torches, for divine
 Should be the light which streams here to illume
 This long-explored but still exhaustless mine 1150
 Of contemplation ; and the azure gloom
 Of an Italian night, where the deep skies assume

Hues which have words, and speak to ye of heaven,
 Floats o'er this vast and wondrous monument,
 And shadows forth its glory. There is given 1155
 Unto the things of earth, which Time hath bent,
 A spirit's feeling, and where he hath leant

His hand, but broke his scythe, there is a power
And magic in the ruin'd battlement,
For which the palace of the present hour 1160
Must yield its pomp, and wait till ages are its dower.

Oh Time ! the beautifier of the dead,
Adorner of the ruin, comforter
And only healer when the heart hath bled ;
Time ! the corrector where our judgments err, 1165
The test of truth, love—sole philosopher,
For all beside are sophists—from thy thrift,
Which never loses though it doth defer—
Time, the avenger ! unto thee I lift
My hands, and eyes, and heart, and crave of thee a gift: 1170

Amidst this wreck, where thou hast made a shrine
And temple more divinely desolate,
Among thy mightier offerings here are mine,
Ruins of years, though few, yet full of fate :
If thou hast ever seen me too elate, 1175
Hear me not ; but if calmly I have borne
Good, and reserved my pride against the hate
Which shall not overwhelm me, let me not have worn
This iron in my soul in vain—shall *they* not mourn ?

And thou, who never yet of human wrong 1180
Left the unbalanced scale, great Nemesis !
Here, where the ancient paid thee homage long—
Thou, who didst call the Furies from the abyss,
And round Orestes bade them howl and hiss
For that unnatural retribution—just, 1185
Had it but been from hands less near—in this
Thy former realm, I call thee from the dust !
Dost thou not hear my heart ?—Awake ! thou shalt, and must.

It is not that I may not have incurr'd
 For my ancestral faults or mine the wound 1190
 I bleed withal, and, had it been conferr'd
 With a just weapon, it had flow'd unbound ;
 But now my blood shall not sink in the ground ;
 To thee I do devote it—*thou* shalt take
 The vengeance, which shall yet be sought and found, 1195
 Which if *I* have not taken for the sake——
 But let that pass—I sleep, but thou shalt yet awake.

And if my voice break forth, 't is not that now
 I shrink from what is suffer'd : let him speak
 Who hath beheld decline upon my brow, 1200
 Or seen my mind's convulsion leave it weak ;
 But in this page a record will I seek.
 Not in the air shall these my words disperse,
 Though I be ashes ; a far hour shall wreak
 The deep prophetic fulness of this verse. 1205
 And pile on human heads the mountain of my curse !

That curse shall be Forgiveness.—Have I not—
 Hear me, my mother Earth ! behold it, Heaven !
 Have I not had to wrestle with my lot ?
 Have I not suffer'd things to be forgiven ? 1210
 Have I not had my brain sear'd, my heart riven,
 Hopes sapp'd, name blighted, Life's life lied away ?
 And only not to desperation driven,
 Because not altogether of such clay
 As rots into the souls of those whom I survey. 1215

From mighty wrongs to petty perfidy
 Have I not seen what human things could do ?
 From the loud roar of foaming calumny
 To the small whisper of the as paltry few,
 And subtler venom of the reptile crew, 1220

The Janus glance of whose significant eye,
Learning to lie with silence, would *seem* true,
And without utterance, save the shrug or sigh,
Deal round to happy fools its speechless obloquy.

But I have lived, and have not lived in vain : 1225
My mind may lose its force, my blood its fire,
And my frame perish even in conquering pain ;
But there is that within me which shall tire
Torture and Time, and breathe when I expire ;
Something unearthly, which they deem not of, 1230
Like the remember'd tone of a mute lyre,
Shall on their soften'd spirits sink, and move
In hearts all rocky now the late remorse of love.

The seal is set.—Now welcome, thou dread power !
Nameless, yet thus omnipotent, which here 1235
Walk'st in the shadow of the midnight hour
With a deep awe, yet all distinct from fear ;
Thy haunts are ever where the dead walls rear
Their ivy mantles, and the solemn scene
Derives from thee a sense so deep and clear 1240
That we become a part of what has been,
And grow unto the spot, all-seeing but unseen.

And here the buzz of eager nations ran,
In murmur'd pity, or loud-roar'd applause,
As man was slaughter'd by his fellow-man. 1245
And wherefore slaughter'd ? wherefore, but because
Such were the bloody Circus' genial laws,
And the imperial pleasure.—Wherefore not ?
What matters where we fall to fill the maws
Of worms—on battle-plains or listed spot ? 1250
Both are but theatres where the chief actors rot.

I see before me the Gladiator lie :
 He leans upon his hand—his manly brow
 Consents to death, but conquers agony,
 And his droop'd head sinks gradually low— 1255
 And through his side the last drops, ebbing slow
 From the red gash, fall heavy, one by one,
 Like the first of a thunder-shower ; and now
 The arena swims around him—he is gone,
 Ere ceased the inhuman shout which hail'd the wretch who
 won. 1260

He heard it, but he heeded not—his eyes
 Were with his heart, and that was far away ;
 He reck'd not of the life he lost nor prize,
 But where his rude hut by the Danube lay,
There were his young barbarians all at play, 1265
There was their Dacian mother—he, their sire,
 Butcher'd to make a Roman holiday—
 All this rush'd with his blood—Shall he expire
 And unavenged ? Arise ! ye Goths, and glut your ire !

But here, where Murder breathed her bloody steam ; 1270
 And here, where buzzing nations choked the ways,
 And roar'd or murmur'd like a mountain stream
 Dashing or winding as its torrent strays ;
 Here, where the Roman million's blame or praise
 Was death or life, the playthings of a crowd, 1275
 My voice sounds much—and fall the stars' faint rays
 On the arena void—seats crush'd—walls bow'd—
 And galleries, where my steps seem echoes strangely loud.

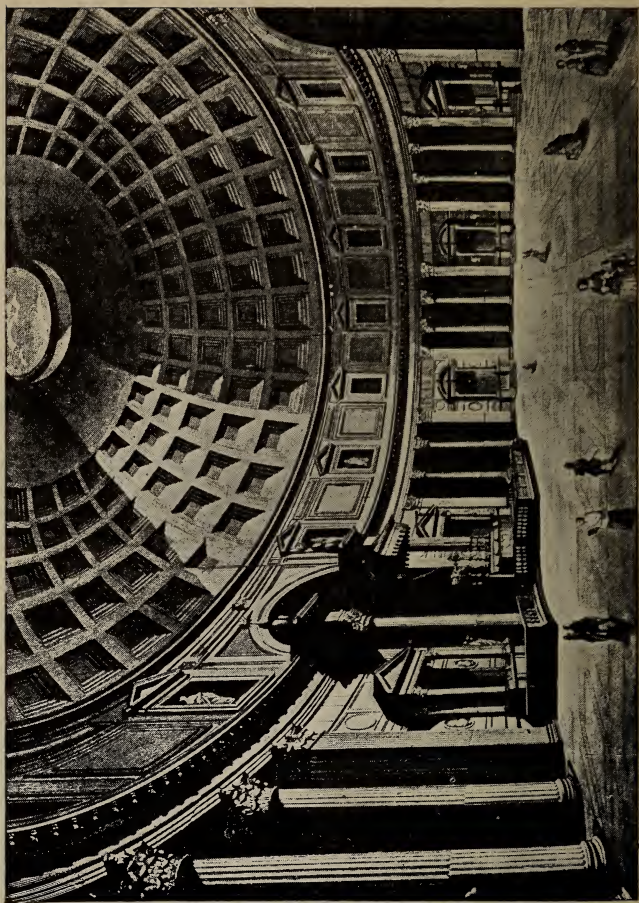
A ruin—yet what ruin ! from its mass
 Walls, palaces, half-cities, have been rear'd ; 1280
 Yet oft the enormous skeleton ye pass,
 And marvel where the spoil could have appear'd.

Hath it indeed been plunder'd, or but clear'd ?
 Alas ! developed, opens the decay,
 When the colossal fabric's form is near'd : 1285
 It will not bear the brightness of the day,
 Which streams too much on all years, man, have reft away.

But when the rising moon begins to climb
 Its topmost arch, and gently pauses there ;
 When the stars twinkle through the loops of time, 1290
 And the low night-breeze waves along the air
 The garland-forest, which the gray walls wear,
 Like laurels on the bald first Cæsar's head ;
 When the light shines serene but doth not glare,
 ' Then in this magic circle raise the dead ; 1295
 Heroes have trod this spot—'t is on their dust ye tread.

" While stands the Coliseum, Rome shall stand ;
 When falls the Coliseum, Rome shall fall ;
 And when Rome falls—the World." From our own land
 Thus spake the pilgrims o'er this mighty wall 1300
 In Saxon times, which we are wont to call
 Ancient ; and these three mortal things are still
 On their foundations, and unalter'd all ;
 Rome and her Ruin past Redemption's skill,
 The World, the same wide den—of thieves, or what ye will.

Simple, erect, severe, austere, sublime— 1306
 Shrine of all saints and temple of all gods,
 From Jove to Jesus—spared and blest by time ;
 Looking tranquillity, while falls or nods
 Arch, empire, each thing round thee, and man plods 1310
 His way through thorns to ashes—glorious dome !
 Shalt thou not last ? Time's scythe and tyrants' rods
 Shiver upon thee—sanctuary and home
 Of art and piety—Pantheon !—pride of Rome .



Interior of the Pantheon.

Relic of nobler days, and noblest arts ! 1315
 Despoil'd yet perfect, with thy circle spreads
 A holiness appealing to all hearts—
 To art a model ; and to him who treads
 Rome for the sake of ages, Glory sheds
 Her light through thy sole aperture ; to those 1320
 Who worship, here are altars for their beads ;
 And they who feel for genius may repose
 Their eyes on honour'd forms, whose busts around them close.

There is a dungeon, in whose dim drear light
 What do I gaze on ? Nothing : Look again ! 1325
 Two forms are slowly shadow'd on my sight—
 Two insulated phantoms of the brain :
 It is not so ; I see them full and plain—
 An old man, and a female young and fair,
 Fresh as a nursing mother, in whose vein 1330
 The blood is nectar :—but what doth she there,
 With her unmantled neck, and bosom white and bare ?

Full swells the deep pure fountain of young life,
 Where *on* the heart and *from* the heart we took
 Our first and sweetest nurture, when the wife, 1335
 Blest into mother, in the innocent look
 Or even the piping cry of lips that brook
 No pain and small suspense, a joy perceives
 Man knows not, when from out its cradled nook
 She sees her little bud put forth its leaves— 1340
 What may the fruit be yet ? I know not—Cain was Eve's.

But here youth offers to old age the food,
 The milk of his own gift : it is her sire
 To whom she renders back the debt of blood
 Born with her birth. No ; he shall not expire 1345
 While in those warm and lovely veins the fire

Of health and holy feeling can provide
 Great Nature's Nile, whose deep stream rises higher,
 Than Egypt's river : from that gentle side
 Drink, drink and live, old man ! Heaven's realm holds no
 such tide. 1350

The starry fable of the Milky Way
 Has not thy story's purity ; it is
 A constellation of a sweeter ray,
 And sacred Nature triumphs more in this
 Reverse of her decree, than in the abyss 1355
 Where sparkle distant worlds :—Oh, holiest nurse !
 No drop of that clear stream its way shall miss
 To thy sire's heart, replenishing its source
 With life, as our freed souls rejoin the universe.

Turn to the mole which Hadrian rear'd on high, 1360
 Imperial mimic of old Egypt's piles,
 Colossal copyist of deformity,
 Whose travell'd phantasy from the far Nile's
 Enormous model, doom'd the artist's toils
 To build for giants, and for his vain earth, 1365
 His shrunk ashes, raise this dome : How smiles
 The gazer's eye with philosophic mirth,
 To view the huge design which sprung from such a birth !

But lo ! the dome—the vast and wondrous dome,
 To which Diana's marvel was a cell— 1370
 Christ's mighty shrine above his martyr's tomb !
 I have beheld the Ephesian's miracle ;—
 Its columns strew the wilderness, and dwell
 The hyæna and the jackal in their shade ;
 I have beheld Sophia's bright roofs swell 1375
 Their glittering mass i' the sun, and have survey'd
 Its sanctuary the while the usurping Moslem pray'd ;

But thou, of temples old, or altars new,
 Standest alone, with nothing like to thee—
 Worthiest of God, the holy and the true. 1380
 Since Zion's desolation, when that He
 Forsook his former city, what could be
 Of earthly structures, in his honour piled,
 Of a sublimer aspect? Majesty,
 Power, Glory, Strength, and Beauty all are aisled 1385
 In this eternal ark of worship undefiled.

Enter : its grandeur overwhelms thee not ;
 And why? It is not lessen'd ; but thy mind,
 Expanded by the genius of the spot,
 Has grown colossal, and can only find 1390
 A fit abode wherein appear enshrined
 Thy hopes of immortality ; and thou
 Shalt one day, if found worthy, so defined,
 See thy God face to face, as thou dost now
 His Holy of Holies, nor be blasted by his brow. 1395

Thou movest, but increasing with the advance,
 Like climbing some great Alp, which still doth rise,
 Deceived by its gigantic elegance ;
 Vastness which grows, but grows to harmonise—
 All musical in its immensities ; 1400
 Rich marbles, richer painting—shrines where flame
 The lamps of gold—and haughty dome which vies
 In air with Earth's chief structures, though their frame
 Sits on the firm-set ground, and this the clouds must claim.

Thou seest not all ; but piecemeal thou must break, 1405
 To separate contemplation, the great whole ;
 And as the ocean many bays will make
 That ask the eye—so here condense thy soul
 To more immediate objects, and control

Thy thoughts until thy mind hath got by heart 1410
 Its eloquent proportions, and unroll
 In mighty graduations, part by part,
 The glory which at once upon thee did not dart,

Not by its fault—but thine : Our outward sense
 Is but of gradual grasp—and as it is 1415
 That what we have of feeling most intense
 Outstrips our faint expression ; even so this
 Outshining and o’erwhelming edifice
 Fools our fond gaze, and greatest of the great
 Defies at first our Nature’s littleness, 1420
 Till, growing with its growth, we thus dilate
 Our spirits to the size of that they contemplate.

Then pause, and be enlighten’d ; there is more
 In such a survey than the sating gaze
 Of wonder pleased, or awe which would adore 1425
 The worship of the place, or the mere praise
 Of art and its great masters, who could raise
 What former time, nor skill, nor thought could plan ;
 The fountain of sublimity displays
 Its depth, and thence may draw the mind of man 1430
 Its golden sands, and learn what great conceptions can.

Or, turning to the Vatican, go see
 Laocoön’s torture dignifying pain—
 A father’s love and mortal’s agony
 With an immortal’s patience blending ; Vain 1435
 The struggle ; vain, against the coiling strain
 And gripe, and deepening of the dragon’s grasp,
 The old man’s clench ; the long envenom’d chain
 Rivets the living links,—the enormous asp
 Enforces pang on pang, and stifles gasp on gasp. 1440

Or view the Lord of the unerring bow,
 The God of life, and poesy, and light—
 The Sun in human limbs array'd, and brow
 All radiant from his triumph in the fight ;
 The shaft hath just been shot—the arrow bright 1445
 With an immortal's vengeance ; in his eye
 And nostril beautiful disdain, and might
 And majesty, flash their full lightnings by,
 Developing in that one glance the Deity.

But in his delicate form—a dream of Love, 1450
 Shaped by some solitary nymph, whose breast
 Long'd for a deathless lover from above,
 And madden'd in that vision—are exprest
 All that ideal beauty ever bless'd
 The mind with in its most unearthly mood, 1455
 When each conception was a heavenly guest—
 A ray of immortality—and stood
 Starlike, around, until they gather'd to a god !

And if it be Prometheus stole from Heaven
 The fire which we endure, it was repaid 1460
 By him to whom the energy was given
 Which this poetic marble hath array'd
 With an eternal glory—which, if made
 By human hands, is not of human thought ;
 And Time himself hath hallow'd it, nor laid 1465
 One ringlet in the dust—nor hath it caught
 A tinge of years, but breathes the flame with which 't was
 wrought.

But where is he, the Pilgrim of my song,
 The being who upheld it through the past ?
 Methinks he cometh late and tarries long. 1470
 He is no more—these breathings are his last ;

His wanderings done, his visions ebbing fast,
 And he himself as nothing :—if he was
 Aught but a phantasy, and could be class'd
 With forms which live and suffer—let that pass— 1475
 His shadow fades away into Destruction's mass,

Which gathers shadow, substance, life, and all
 That we inherit in its mortal shroud,
 And spreads the dim and universal pall
 Through which all things grow phantoms ; and the
 cloud 1480
 Between us sinks and all which ever glow'd,
 Till Glory's self is twilight, and displays
 A melancholy halo scarce allow'd
 To hover on the verge of darkness ; rays
 Sadder than saddest night, for they distract the gaze, 1485

And send us prying into the abyss,
 To gather what we shall be when the frame
 Shall be resolved to something less than this
 Its wretched essence ; and to dream of fame,
 And wipe the dust from off the idle name 1490
 We never more shall hear,—but never more,
 Oh, happier thought ! can we be made the same :
 It is enough in sooth that *once* we bore
 These fardels of the heart—the heart whose sweat was gore.

Hark ! forth from the abyss a voice proceeds, 1495
 A long low distant murmur of dread sound,
 Such as arises when a nation bleeds
 With some deep and immedicable wound ;
 Through storm and darkness yawns the rending ground,
 The gulf is thick with phantoms, but the chief 1500
 Seems royal still, though with her head discrown'd,
 And pale, but lovely, with maternal grief
 She clasps a babe, to whom her breast yields no relief,

Scion of chiefs and monarchs, where art thou ?
 Fond hope of many nations, art thou dead ? 1505
 Could not the grave forget thee, and lay low
 Some less majestic, less beloved head ?
 In the sad midnight, while thy heart still bled,
 The mother of a moment, o'er thy boy,
 Death hush'd that pang for ever : with thee fled 1510
 The present happiness and promised joy
 Which fill'd the imperial isles so full it seem'd to cloy.

Peasants bring forth in safety.—Can it be,
 Oh thou that wert so happy, so adored !
 Those who weep not for kings shall weep for thee, 1515
 And Freedom's heart, grown heavy, cease to hoard
 Her many griefs for ONE ; for she had pour'd
 Her orisons for thee, and o'er thy head
 Beheld her Iris.—Thou, too, lonely lord,
 And desolate consort—vainly wert thou wed ! 1520
 The husband of a year ! the father of the dead !

Of sackcloth was thy wedding garment made ;
 Thy bridal's fruit is ashes : in the dust
 The fair-hair'd Daughter of the Isles is laid,
 The love of millions ! How we did intrust 1525
 Futurity to her ! and, though it must
 Darken above our bones, yet fondly deem'd
 Our children should obey her child, and bless'd
 Her and her hoped-for seed, whose promise seem'd
 Like stars to shepherd's eyes :—'t was but a meteor beam'd.

Woe unto us, not her ; for she sleeps well : 1531
 The fickle reek of popular breath, the tongue
 Of hollow counsel, the false oracle,
 Which from the birth of monarchy hath rung
 Its knell in princely ears, till the o'erstung 1535

Nations have arm'd in madness, the strange fate
Which tumbles mightiest sovereigns, and hath flung
Against their blind omnipotence a weight
Within the opposing scale, which crushes soon or late,—

These might have been her destiny ; but no, 1540
Our hearts deny it : and so young, so fair,
Good without effort, great without a foe ;
But now a bride and mother—and now *there* !
How many ties did that stern moment tear !
From thy Sire's to his humblest subject's breast 1545
Is link'd the electric chain of that despair,
Whose shock was as an earthquake's, and opprest
The land which loved thee so that none could love thee best.

Lo, Nemi ! navell'd in the woody hills
So far, that the uprooting wind which tears 1550
The oak from his foundation, and which spills
The ocean o'er its boundary, and bears
Its foam against the skies, reluctant spares
The oval mirror of thy glassy lake ;
And calm as cherish'd hate, its surface wears 1555
A deep cold settled aspect nought can shake,
All coil'd into itself and round, as sleeps the snake.

And near, Albano's scarce divided waves
Shine from a sister valley ;—and afar
The Tiber winds, and the broad ocean laves 1560
The Latian coast where sprung the Epic war,
'Arms and the man,' whose re-ascending star
Rose o'er an empire :—but beneath thy right
Tully reposed from Rome ; and where yon bar
Of girdling mountains intercepts the sight 1565
The Sabine farm was till'd, the weary bard's delight.

But I forget.—My Pilgrim's shrine is won,
 And he and I must part,—so let it be,—
 His task and mine alike are nearly done ;
 Yet once more let us look upon the sea ; 1570
 The midland ocean breaks on him and me,
 And from the Alban Mount we now behold
 Our friend of youth, that Ocean, which when we
 Beheld it last by Calpe's rock unfold
 Those waves, we followed on till the dark Euxine roll'd 1575

Upon the blue Symplegades : long years—
 Long, though not very many—since have done
 Their work on both ; some suffering, and some tears
 Have left us nearly where we had begun :
 Yet not in vain our mortal race hath run ; 1580
 We have had our reward, and it is here,—
 That we can yet feel gladden'd by the sun,
 And reap from earth, sea, joy almost as dear
 As if there were no man to trouble what is clear.

Oh ! that the Desert were my dwelling-place, 1585
 With one fair Spirit for my minister,
 That I might all forget the human race,
 And, hating no one, love but only her !
 Ye elements !—in whose ennobling stir
 I feel myself exalted—Can ye not 1590
 Accord me such a being ? Do I err
 In deeming such inhabit many a spot ?
 Though with them to converse can rarely be our lot.

There is a pleasure in the pathless woods,
 There is a rapture on the lonely shore, 1595
 There is society, where none intrudes,
 By the deep Sea, and music in its roar :
 I love not Man the less, but Nature more,

From these our interviews, in which I steal
From all I may be, or have been before, 1600
To mingle with the Universe, and feel
What I can ne'er express, yet cannot all conceal.

Roll on, thou deep and dark blue Ocean—roll !
Ten thousand fleets sweep over thee in vain ;
Man marks the earth with ruin—his control 1605
Stops with the shore ; upon the watery plain
The wrecks are all thy deed, nor doth remain
A shadow of man's ravage, save his own,
When, for a moment, like a drop of rain,
He sinks into thy depths with bubbling groan, 1610
Without a grave, unknell'd, uncoffin'd, and unknown.

His steps are not upon thy paths,—thy fields
Are not a spoil for him,—thou dost arise
And shake him from thee ; the vile strength he wields
For earth's destruction thou dost all despise, 1615
Spurning him from thy bosom to the skies,
And send'st him, shivering in thy playful spray
And howling, to his Gods, where haply lies
His petty hope in some near port or bay,
And dashest him again to earth :—there let him lay. 1620

The armaments which thunderstrike the walls
Of rock-built cities, bidding nations quake,
And monarchs tremble in their capitals,
The oak leviathans, whose huge ribs make
Their clay creator the vain title take 1625
Of lord of thee, and arbiter of war—
These are thy toys, and, as the snowy flake,
They melt into thy yeast of waves, which mar
Alike the Armada's pride or spoils of Trafalgar.

Thy shores are empires, changed in all save thee— 1630
 Assyria, Greece, Rome, Carthage, what are they ?
 Thy waters wash'd them power while they were free,
 And many a tyrant since ; their shores obey
 The stranger, slave, or savage ; their decay
 Has dried up realms to deserts :—not so thou ;— 1635
 Unchangeable, save to thy wild waves' play,
 Time writes no wrinkle on thine azure brow :
 Such as creation's dawn beheld, thou rollest now.

Thou glorious mirror, where the Almighty's form
 Glasses itself in tempests ; in all time,— 1640
 Calm or convulsed, in breeze, or gale, or storm,
 Icing the pole, or in the torrid clime
 Dark-heaving—boundless, endless, and sublime,
 The image of eternity, the throne
 Of the Invisible ; even from out thy slime 1645
 The monsters of the deep are made ; each zone
 Obeys thee ; thou goest forth, dread, fathomless, alone.

And I have loved thee, Ocean ! and my joy
 Of youthful sports was on thy breast to be
 Borne, like thy bubbles, onward : from a boy 1650
 I wanton'd with thy breakers—they to me
 Were a delight ; and if the freshening sea
 Made them a terror—'t was a pleasing fear,
 For I was as it were a child of thee,
 And trusted to thy billows far and near, 1655
 And laid my hand upon thy mane—as I do here.

My task is done, my song hath ceased, my theme
 Has died into an echo ; it is fit
 The spell should break of this protracted dream.
 The torch shall be extinguish'd which hath lit 1660

My midnight lamp—and what is writ, is writ ;
Would it were worthier ! but I am not now
That which I have been—and my visions flit
Less palpably before me—and the glow
Which in my spirit dwelt is fluttering, faint, and low. 1665

Farewell ! a word that must be, and hath been—
A sound which makes us linger ;—yet—farewell !
Ye ! who have traced the Pilgrim to the scene
Which is his last, if in your memories dwell
A thought which once was his, if on ye swell 1670
A single recollection, not in vain
He wore his sandal-shoon and scallop-shell ;
Farewell ! with *him* alone may rest the pain,
If such there were—with *you*, the moral of his strain.

SHELLEY.

OZYMANDIAS OF EGYPT.

I met a traveller from an antique land
Who said : Two vast and trunkless legs of stone
Stand in the desert. Near them on the sand,
Half sunk, a shatter'd visage lies, whose frown
And wrinkled lip and sneer of cold command 5
Tell that its sculptor well those passions read
Which yet survive, stamp'd on these lifeless things,
The hand that mock'd them and the heart that fed ;
And on the pedestal these words appear :
'My name is Ozymandias, king of kings : 10
Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair !'
Nothing beside remains. Round the decay
Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare,
The lone and level sands stretch far away.

TO A SKYLARK.

Hail to thee, blithe Spirit !
Bird thou never wert,
That from heaven, or near it
Pourest thy full heart
In profuse strains of unpremeditated art. 5

Higher still and higher
From the earth thou springest
Like a cloud of fire ;
The blue deep thou wingest,
And singing still dost soar, and soaring ever singest. 10

In the golden lightning
Of the sunken sun
O'er which clouds are brightening,
Thou dost float and run,
Like an unbodied joy whose race is just begun. 15

The pale purple even
Melts around thy flight ;
Like a star of heaven
In the broad daylight
Thou art unseen, but yet I hear thy shrill delight : 20

Keen as are the arrows
Of that silver sphere,
Whose intense lamp narrows
In the white dawn clear
Until we hardly see, we feel that it is there. 25

All the earth and air
With thy voice is loud,
As, when night is bare,
From one lonely cloud
The moon rains out her beams, and heaven is overflow'd. 30

What thou art we know not ;
What is most like thee ?
From rainbow clouds there flow not
Drops so bright to see
As from thy presence showers a rain of melody. 35

Like a poet hidden
 In the light of thought,
 Singing hymns unbidden,
 Till the world is wrought
 To sympathy with hopes and fears it heeded not : 40

Like a high-born maiden
 In a palace tower,
 Soothing her love-laden
 Soul in secret hour
 With music sweet as love, which overflows her bower : 45

Like a glow-worm golden
 In a dell of dew,
 Scattering unbeholden
 Its aerial hue
 Among the flowers and grass, which screen it from the view : 50

Like a rose embower'd
 In its own green leaves,
 By warm winds deflower'd,
 Till the scent it gives
 Makes faint with too much sweet these heavy-wingéd thieves. 55

Sound of vernal showers
 On the twinkling grass,
 Rain awaken'd flowers,
 All that ever was
 Joyous, and clear, and fresh, thy music doth surpass. 60

Teach us, sprite or bird,
 What sweet thoughts are thine :
 I have never heard
 Praise of love or wine
 That panted forth a flood of rapture so divine. 65

- Chorus hymeneal
 Or triumphal chaunt
 Match'd with thine, would be all
 But an empty vaunt—
 A thing wherein we feel there is some hidden want. 70
- What objects are the fountains
 Of thy happy strain?
 What fields, or waves, or mountains?
 What shapes of sky or plain?
 What love of thine own kind? what ignorance of pain? 75
- With thy clear keen joyance .
 Languor cannot be :
 Shadow of annoyance
 Never came near thee :
 Thou lovest ; but ne'er knew love's sad satiety. 80
- Waking or asleep
 Thou of death must deem
 Things more true and deep
 Than we mortals dream,
 Or how could thy notes flow in such a crystal stream? 85
- We look before and after,
 And pine for what is not :
 Our sincerest laughter
 With some pain is fraught ;
 Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought. 90
- Yet if we could scorn
 Hate, and pride, and fear ;
 If we were things born
 Not to shed a tear,
 I know not how thy joy we ever should come near. 95

Better, than all measures
 Of delightful sound,
 Better than all treasures
 That in books are found,
 Thy skill to poet were, thou scorner of the ground ! 100

Teach me half the gladness
 That thy brain must know,
 Such harmonious madness
 From my lips would flow,
 The world should listen then, as I am listening now ! 105

THE RECOLLECTION.

Now the last day of many days
 All beautiful and bright as thou,
 The loveliest and the last, is dead :
 Rise, Memory, and write its praise !
 Up, to thy wonted work ! come, trace 5
 The epitaph of glory fled,
 For now the earth has changed its face,
 A frown is on the heaven's brow.

We wander'd to the Pine Forest
 That skirts the Ocean's foam ; 10
 The lightest wind was in its nest,
 The tempest in its home.
 The whispering waves were half asleep,
 The clouds were gone to play,
 And on the bosom of the deep 15
 The smile of heaven lay ;

It seem'd as if the hour were one
Sent from beyond the skies
Which scatter'd from above the sun
A light of Paradise ! 20

We paused amid the pines that stood
The giants of the waste,
Tortured by storms to shapes as rude
As serpents interlaced,—
And soothed by every azure breath 25
That under heaven is blown,
To harmonies and hues beneath,
As tender as its own :
Now all the tree-tops lay asleep
Like green waves on the sea, 30
As still as in the silent deep
The ocean-woods may be.

How calm it was !—the silence there
By such a chain was bound,
That even the busy woodpecker 35
Made stiller by her sound
The inviolable quietness ;
The breath of peace we drew
With its soft motion made not less
The calm that round us grew. 40
There seem'd from the remotest seat
Of the white mountain waste
To the soft flower beneath our feet
A magic circle traced,—
A spirit interfused around, 45
A thrilling silent life ;
To momentary peace it bound
Our mortal nature's strife ;—

And still I felt the centre of
The magic circle there 50
Was one fair form that fill'd with love
The lifeless atmosphere.

We paused beside the pools that lie
Under the forest bough ;
Each seem'd as 'twere a little sky
Gulf'd in a world below ;

A firmament of purple light
Which in the dark earth lay,
More boundless than the depth of night
And purer than the day— 60

In which the lovely forests grew
As in the upper air,
More perfect both in shape and hue
Than any spreading there.

There lay the glade and neighbouring lawn, 65
And through the dark green wood
The white sun twinkling like the dawn
Out of a speckled cloud.

Sweet views which in our world above
Can never well be seen 70
Were imaged by the water's love
Of that fair forest green :

And all was interfused beneath
With an Elysian glow,
An atmosphere without a breath,
A softer day below. 75

Like one beloved, the scene had lent
 To the dark water's breast
 Its every leaf and lineament
 With more than truth exprest ; 80

Until an envious wind crept by,
Like an unwelcome thought
Which from the mind's too faithful eye
Blots one dear image out.
—Though thou art ever fair and kind,
The forests ever green,
Less oft is peace in Shelley's mind
Than calm in waters seen!

85

ON FIRST LOOKING INTO CHAPMAN'S HOMER.

THE TERROR OF DEATH.

[101]

Never have relish in the faery power
 Of unreflecting love—then on the shore
 Of the wide world I stand alone, and think
 Till Love and Fame to nothingness do sink.

ODE TO A NIGHTINGALE.

My heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains
 My sense, as though of hemlock I had drunk,
 Or emptied some dull opiate to the drains
 One minute past, and Lethe-wards had sunk :
 'Tis not through envy of thy happy lot, 5
 But being too happy in thy happiness,—
 That thou, light-wingéd Dryad of the trees,
 In some melodious plot
 Of beechen-green, and shadows numberless,
 Singest of summer in full-throated ease. 10

O, for a draught of vintage! that hath been
 Cool'd a long age in the deep-delvéd earth,
 Tasting of Flora and the country green,
 Dance, and Provençal song, and sun-burnt mirth !
 O for a beaker full of the warm South, 15
 Full of the true, the blushful Hippocrene,
 With beaded bubbles winking at the brim
 And purple-stainéd mouth ;
 That I might drink, and leave the world unseen,
 And with thee fade away into the forest dim : 20

Fade far away, dissolve, and quite forget
 What thou among the leaves hast never known,
 The weariness, the fever, and the fret
 Here, where men sit and hear each other groan ;

Where palsy shakes a few, sad, last gray hairs, 25
 Where youth grows pale, and spectre-thin, and dies ;
 Where but to think is to be full of sorrow
 And leaden-eyed despairs ;
 Where Beauty cannot keep her lustrous eyes,
 Or new Love pine at them beyond to-morrow. 30

Away ! away ! for I will fly to thee,
 Not charioted by Bacchus and his pards,
 But on the viewless wings of Poesy,
 Though the dull brain perplexes and retards :
 Already with thee ! tender is the night, 35
 And haply the Queen-Moon is on her throne,
 Cluster'd around by all her starry Fays ;
 But here there is no light
 Save what from heaven is with the breezes blown
 Through verdurous glooms and winding mossy ways. 40

I cannot see what flowers are at my feet,
 Nor what soft incense hangs upon the boughs,
 But, in embalméd darkness, guess each sweet
 Wherewith the seasonable month endows
 The grass, the thicket, and the fruit-tree wild ; 45
 White hawthorn, and the pastoral eglantine ;
 Fast-fading violets cover'd up in leaves ;
 And mid-May's eldest child
 The coming musk-rose, full of dewy-wine,
 The mumurous haunt of flies on summer eves. 50

Darkling I listen ; and for many a time
 I have been half in love with easeful Death,
 Call'd him soft names in many a muséd rhyme,
 To take into the air my quiet breath ;
 Now more than ever seems it rich to die, 55
 To cease upon the midnight with no pain,

While thou art pouring forth thy soul abroad
 In such an ecstasy !

Still wouldst thou sing, and I have ears in vain—
 To thy high requiem become a sod. 60

Thou wast not born for death, immortal Bird !

No hungry generations tread thee down ;

The voice I hear this passing night was heard

In ancient days by emperor and clown :

Perhaps the self-same song that found a path 65

Through the sad heart of Ruth, when, sick for home,

She stood in tears amid the alien corn ;

The same that oft-times hath

Charm'd magic casements, opening on the foam

Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn. 70

Forlorn ! the very word is like a bell

To toll me back from thee to my sole self !

Adieu ! the fancy cannot cheat so well

As she is famed to do, deceiving elf.

Adieu ! adieu ! thy plaintive anthem fades 75

Past the near meadows, over the still stream,

Up the hill-side ; and now 'tis buried deep

In the next valley-glades :

Was it a vision, or a waking dream ?

Fled is that music :—do I wake or sleep ? 80

ODE TO AUTUMN.

Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness,

Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun ;

Conspiring with him how to load and bless

With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eaves run ;

To bend with apples the moss'd cottage-trees, 5
And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core ;
To swell the gourd, and plump the hazel shells
With a sweet kernel ; to set budding more
And still more, later flowers for the bees,
Until they think warm days will never cease ; 10
For Summer has o'erbrimm'd their clammy cells.

Who hath not seen thee oft amid thy store ?
Sometimes whoever seeks abroad may find
Thee sitting careless on a granary floor,
Thy hair soft-lifted by the winnowing wind ; 15
Or on a half-reap'd furrow sound asleep,
Drowsed with the fume of poppies, while thy hook
Spares the next swath and all its twined flowers ;
And sometime like a gleaner thou dost keep
Steady thy laden head across a brook ; 20
Or by a cyder-press, with patient look,
Thou watchest the last oozyings, hours by hours.

Where are the songs of Spring ? Ay, where are they ?
Think not of them, thou hast thy music too,—
While barr'd clouds bloom the soft-dying day 25
And touch the stubble-plains with rosy hue ;
Then in a wailful choir the small gnats mourn
Among the river-sallows, borne aloft
Or sinking as the light wind lives or dies ;
And full-grown lambs loud bleat from hilly bourn ; 30
Hedge-cricket sing ; and now with treble soft
The redbreast whistles from a garden-croft,
And gathering swallows twitter in the skies.

THE HUMAN SEASONS.

Four Seasons fill the measure of the year ;
There are four seasons in the mind of man :
He has his lusty Spring, when fancy clear
Takes in all beauty with an easy span :
He has his Summer, when luxuriously 5
Spring's honey'd cud of youthful thought he loves
To ruminate, and by such dreaming high
Is nearest unto heaven : quiet coves
His soul has in its Autumn, when his wings
He furleth close ; contented so to look 10
On mists in idleness—to let fair things
Pass by unheeded as a threshold brook.
He has his Winter too of pale misfeature,
Or else he would forego his mortal nature.

NOTES.

NOTES.

GOLDSMITH.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH was born in the village of Pallas, county of Longford, Ireland, on November 10th, 1728. At this date his father, the Rev. Charles Goldsmith, was with difficulty maintaining his family on something less than "forty pounds a year," derived partly from farming and partly from giving assistance to the rector of the neighbouring parish of Kilkenny West. Upon the death of this rector, two years later, Charles Goldsmith succeeded to the vacant living and an income of some £200 a year. In consequence, he moved to the village of Lissoy, with which Oliver's earliest recollections were, therefore, connected. "The Goldsmiths," it is said, "were always a strange family. They rarely acted like other people; their hearts were always in the right place, but their heads seemed to be doing anything but what they ought." The Rev. Charles Goldsmith was no exception. His untiring benevolence, his lack of worldly wisdom, and his oddities are reflected in several of his son's fictitious personages. "They who have loved, laughed or wept," says Forster, "with the father of the man in black in the *Citizen of the World*, the preacher of the *Deserted Village*, or the hero of the *Vicar of Wakefield*, have given laughter, love and tears to the reverend Charles Goldsmith."

Oliver was a sensitive, awkward, and homely child, and the natural plainness of his features was intensified by a severe attack of small-pox. His very appearance seemed to invite the rude jokes of his companions, and at the various schools in the neighbourhood which he attended, he was a sort of butt among his play-fellows. Nor did he distinguish himself in his studies; on the contrary, the impression he seems to have left both on companions and teachers was that of dullness and stupidity. Notwithstanding there were some indications of intellectual promise which encouraged his father to send him in 1744 to Trinity College, Dublin. Unfortunately Charles Goldsmith was unable to make his son the requisite allowance. Oliver, therefore, entered as a "sizar," i.e., a sort of charity student, who in return for the perform-

ance of certain menial duties received board, lodging, and tuition. Such a situation, for Goldsmith at least, with his "exquisite sensibility to contempt," involved much wretchedness. To make matters worse, he was placed under the tutorship of a coarse and brutal man, who made his ungainly and unpromising pupil the object of sarcasm and insult. Under such circumstances Oliver's innate tendency to idleness and Bohemianism naturally gained the ascendant. He neglected his studies, was involved in a college riot, and was knocked down by his tutor while giving a noisy entertainment in his rooms. He was continually worried, too, by debts; as, perhaps, in the circumstances, the most prudent student might have been, and Goldsmith had not, at any period of his life, skill in the management of money. His pecuniary difficulties were increased by that inherited softness of heart which led him to relieve the real or pretended miseries of those apparently worse off than himself. His sympathies were always strongly with the poor, and with them his earliest literary efforts are connected. We are told he used to earn a few pence by writing street ballads, and delighted to linger on the corners where they were sung, to mark the effect upon the humble audience.

In February, 1749, he took his B.A. degree. His friends destined him for the church; but meanwhile, being too young to apply for orders, he returned home. His father had recently died, his mother was settled at the town of Ballymahon, near Lissoy; his elder brother was curate at Pallas; a sister was married and living in the old home at Lissoy. Residing with his mother, but frequently visiting these and other friends, Oliver spent the next two years of his life, not, as was presumably intended, in applying himself to his divinity studies, but to very different pursuits. He went fishing; he threw the hammer at neighbouring fairs; he occupied himself with flute-playing, and with card-playing. Above all he delighted in certain convivial meetings held nightly at the public house in Ballymahon, where he was the presiding spirit. Of the nature of these meetings, no inadequate idea may be formed from the famous scene at the "Three Jolly Pigeons," in the opening of *She Stoops to Conquer*, which exhibits Tony Lumpkin in his glory amidst his boon companions. It is not surprising, accordingly, that at the close of this period the bishop refused him ordination. Then followed a series of unsuccessful attempts to establish himself in the world. For a time he held a tutorship in a private family, and seems to have saved some money which he squandered in a few days—partly, he himself affirmed, in paying his passage out

to America by a vessel that sailed without him. Next, his uncle, Contarine, furnished him with £50 to pursue the study of law in London, but before getting farther than Dublin, our hero lost it at cards. At length in 1752, again through the kindness of his uncle, he was enabled to study medicine at Edinburgh. Subsequent events render it unlikely that his medical studies were very serious; he soon grew restless, and wrote to his uncle that he was eager to continue his work at the famous medical school at Leyden, in Holland. There, accordingly, we find him during some months of 1754, maintaining himself in some mysterious fashion, partly, perhaps, by giving lessons in English. But his eager desire of seeing the world soon started him again on his travels; in February, 1755, he boldly set out from Leyden with a guinea in his pocket, and his flute in his hand, to make a tour of Europe on foot. The details of this journey are involved in obscurity. In later life he used to talk "with great pleasantry of his distresses on the continent, such as living on the hospitality of the friars in convents, sleeping in barns, and picking up a kind of mendicant livelihood by the German flute." As it was Goldsmith's habit, in his literary work, to keep very close to actual experience and observation, it is probable that George Primrose's account of his wanderings, in the *Vicar of Wakefield*, gives a fair idea of the way in which Goldsmith managed to subsist during this journey. A tour on foot, in such circumstances, would bring the pedestrian in very close touch with the life of the people, and impress the scenery very vividly on the mind; and to this, in Goldsmith's case, *The Traveller* bears witness. He passed through Flanders, France, Switzerland, and Italy, and obtained his medical degree at some continental university. In February, 1756, he landed at Dover with a few half pence in his pocket, and made his way to London.

Goldsmith now began a desperate struggle to keep himself from starvation. For a time he seems to have served as an apothecary's assistant. Then he set up as a physician in a humble way in one of the poorest quarters of London. The nature of his success in this attempt may be conjectured from the fact that he quitted it to become a corrector for the press. Through the kindness of a certain Dr. Milner, who kept a boys' boarding-school, he next officiated as usher in this establishment—a position for which he was not at all fitted, and which seems to have been especially painful to his sensitive nature. By accident, he finally fell upon the profession for which he was really qualified, that of literature. To be sure his earliest literary employment was of a very humble

kind. He hired as hack-writer to a certain Dr. Griffiths, a bookseller, and proprietor of *The Monthly Review*. In return for board, lodging, and a certain fixed salary, Goldsmith was to write, under the supervision of Griffiths and his wife, reviews of books, translations, and to do any work of a similar nature which might be imposed upon him. In five months this arrangement came to an end. Goldsmith, despairing of his prospects, gladly accepted an appointment of no promising character which was offered him through the intervention of his friend Dr. Milner; it was that of physician to a factory on the Coromandel Coast. But even this prospect proved illusory; the appointment fell through, either because Goldsmith could not get together the money needful for the preliminary expenses or because his qualifications were found to be unsatisfactory. The latter explanation is made probable by the fact that in December, 1758, he was rejected at the College of Surgeons, where he had presented himself for examination in order to qualify for the position of hospital mate. There was nothing left but literature. He had already, in order to get the money required for his anticipated appointment, begun his first original work, *An Enquiry into the Present State of Polite Learning*, which, although not of the learned character its pretentious title would seem to promise, exhibited some of the grace and liveliness of Goldsmith's later style, and attracted the notice of certain of the purveyors of literature. More work now came to him, but he was often reduced to desperate straits. On one occasion, in order to relieve the necessities of the keeper of the poor lodging-house where he lived, he brought his own stock of money so low that he was forced to pledge books entrusted to him for review. The bookseller, Griffiths, who owned them, seems to have threatened prosecution; the letter Goldsmith wrote in reply exhibits the depth of his dejection: "Sir, I know of no misery but a gaol to which my own imprudencies and your letter seem to point; I have seen it inevitable these three or four weeks, and, by heavens! request it as a favour, as a favour that may prevent something more fatal. I have been some years struggling with a wretched being, with all that contempt which indigence brings with it, with all those strong passions which make contempt insupportable. What then has the gaol that is formidable? I shall at least have the society of wretches, and such is to me true society."

Already, however, the lowest point in Goldsmith's fortunes was past. He gradually began to win fame and friends. Towards the close of 1759 we find him writing a little periodical called *The Bee*, which, although it was a failure at the time, showed Goldsmith's real powers.

With the general public he scored his first success by a series of letters furnished to a journal, *The Public Ledger*; these were subsequently collected under the title of *Letters of a Citizen of the World*. They were supposed to be written by a Chinese visitor to Europe, and are full of delightful satire and humour, sketches of men and things. "The mind of the author," says Austin Dobson, "stored with the miscellaneous observations of thirty years, turns from one subject to another with a freshness and a variety which delight us almost as much as they must have delighted the readers of their own day."

These successes had the natural consequence of bringing Goldsmith into connection with the better class of literary men in London. He became acquainted with Percy, the collector of *Reliques*, and with the great Doctor Johnson. The latter early formed a high opinion of Goldsmith's powers, and repeatedly showed himself a true friend of the younger and less known writer. It was owing to Johnson that Goldsmith was elected to the famous "Club," which numbered among its members some of the most brilliant men in England. Here as elsewhere Goldsmith won the affection of the best men, Johnson, Burke, and Reynolds; but here, as elsewhere, his simplicity, childish vanity, and mal-address led others to regard him in a contemptuous and patronizing way, and tempted even his best friends to make him a subject for their raillery. In society, at least in the society of his superiors or equals, Goldsmith did not shine. "He wrote like an angel, but talk'd like poor Poll," as Garrick's epigram asserts. He lacked knowledge. "It is amazing," said Johnson, "how little Goldsmith knows. He seldom comes where he is not more ignorant than any one else." His shyness, sensitiveness, impetuosity, and vanity were all qualities which prevented him excelling as a conversationalist. What seemed to strike his contemporaries most when they met him, was the difference between the writer with his genius, with his wit, humour, and grace, and the man with his insignificant bodily presence, with his awkwardness, and lack of readiness, his ignorance and childishness. Some of those things, indeed, which were occasionally termed childishness and folly, were really the outcome of a nature finer than the common. When the Duke of Northumberland told him that he would be glad to do something for him, Goldsmith had no favour to beg except for his brother; as for himself he said to the Duke: "I have no dependence on the promises of great men. I look to the booksellers for support; they are my best friends, and I am not inclined to forsake them for others." On a later occasion, the North administration wished to enlist writers on its behalf, and sent

an emissary to Goldsmith. "I found him," narrated this intermediary after the poet's death, "in a miserable set of chambers in the Temple. I told him my authority ; I told him that I was empowered to pay most liberally for his exertions ; and, would you believe it, he was so absurd as to say, 'I can earn as much as will supply my wants without writing for any party. The assistance you offer is therefore unnecessary to me.' And so I left him in his garret."

It was in 1764, by the publication of *The Traveller*, that Goldsmith first won for himself an assured place as a literary man in the estimation of his contemporaries. Four editions of this poem were called for within a twelve month, and the world was disposed to assign to him the highest position among living poets. In 1766 appeared *The Vicar of Wakefield*, the most charming of English novels. "In spite of the inconsistencies of the plot, and the incoherencies of the story," says Austin Dobson, "it remains, and will continue to be, one of the first of our English classics. Its sweet humility, its simplicity, its wisdom and its common sense, its happy mingling of character and Christianity will keep it sweet long after more ambitious, and in many respects abler, works have found their level with the great democracy of the forgotten." Three editions appeared within the year. "It reached its seventh in little more than seven years ; and thus early it had been translated into several European languages."

These two works of his, though they won him fame, seem to have brought little substantial reward. His livelihood now, and always, was chiefly gained by hack-work, of which he did an immense amount during his life time,—the writing of prefaces, text-books, compilations of various kinds. Among the best known of these are his histories of England, of Rome, and of Greece, and his *History of Animated Nature*. The matter of these books was never valuable ; but the lucid narrative and the power of style made them long popular, and they brought to the writer no small returns. To the higher class of his works belongs his comedy, *The Good-Natured Man*, 1768, which had a fair success on the stage, and brought him in some five hundred pounds. This sum, after his usual extravagant fashion, he expended in fitting up for himself fine chambers in the Temple. It is at this date that Goldsmith's period of worldly prosperity begins, if prosperity it may be called. His earnings from this time to his death seem to have been ample to maintain him in comfort and even in luxury. Notwithstanding, Goldsmith was continually in debt, and continually forced to waste his fine powers on hasty and hateful task-work. To his money difficulties, not merely

extravagance, but, perhaps, in a greater degree, inconsiderate benevolence, contributed. He “had a constant levee,” said one of his acquaintances, “of his distressed countrymen, whose wants, as far as he was able, he always relieved; and he has often been known to leave himself even without a guinea in order to supply the necessities of others.” From his youth on he had always enjoyed the society of those beneath him in position and culture; this came partly from broad sympathy, from interest in the study of human nature, and partly because in such society a man so proud, so sensitive, and so maladroit as Goldsmith, was more at ease than among men who were his equals.

In 1770 appeared *The Deserted Village*, a poem of the same species as *The Traveller*, but markedly superior. Goldsmith had also an admirable light, satiric vein in poetry, as is illustrated in *The Haunch of Venison*, and especially in *Retaliation*. His second comedy, *She Stoops to Conquer*, was produced in 1773, and was a great success. “I know of no comedy for many years,” said Johnson, “that has answered so much the great end of comedy—making an audience merry.” Though involving, as Goldsmith’s works are apt to do, weaknesses in structure and improbabilities in plot, *She Stoops to Conquer* is one of the greatest of English comedies in virtue of his humour and vivacity, and the variety and interest of its characters. Goldsmith did not live long after the publication of this play. His constitution had doubtless been weakened by the hardships and irregularities of his life, and he died in his prime after a short illness, April 4th, 1774. He left debts to the amount of £2000. “Is your mind at ease?” asked the physician of his patient as he lay on his death bed; “No, it is *not*,” was the reply. “He died of a fever,” wrote Johnson in a letter to a friend, “exasperated as I believe, by the fear of distress. He raised money and squandered it by every artifice of acquisition and folly of expense. But let not his frailties be remembered; he was a very great man.”

The most prominent and pervading source of attraction in Goldsmith’s writings is the charm of style. This was an inborn power; it is noticeable in his letters at a very early period; and it was, doubtless, developed by the continual practice which the necessities of his life forced upon him. It lent a fascination to his most perfunctory task-work. *Nullum fere scribendi genus non tetigit, nullum quod tetigit non ornavit* wrote Johnson in the epitaph for Westminster Abbey. Grace, charm, ease, naturalness,—such epithets as these are the first that come to the lips when we speak of the style of Goldsmith. And these qualities are the more remarkable, and the more indicative of a certain

independence and originality in the writer, because they are characteristics strikingly absent from contemporary English literature, both prose and poetry. In the prose of that day, the prevailing style is represented by the stiff, unidiomatic, balanced period of Johnson; the model in poetry was the elaborate, rhetorical couplet of Pope. Such writing might be effective and striking; the reader might admire, might be impressed by the force, the smartness, or the wit; but it lacked grace and tenderness. One does not forget the art of the writer in his charm, as one does when reading Goldsmith. Style is allied with what in character we call temperament or disposition, and it is not difficult to perceive a parallelism between the unconventional, impulsive, and tender-hearted Goldsmith and the predominant peculiarities of his writing.

But the excellence of Goldsmith in his best work is not wholly dependent on mere graces of expression; a large part of its attractiveness and power lies in the matter. No doubt, this matter is limited; he employs the same material over and over again. It requires no great penetration to observe that the range of characters and scenes covered by his two great poems, his comedies, his novel, and many of his essays are from the same sphere of observation, and that a somewhat narrow one. But then they possess the great merit of being drawn direct from nature and not second-hand from books. The writer knows his subject well, and perfectly enters into it. The circumstances of Goldsmith's life brought him into close touch with certain aspects of humanity which had scarcely been treated in recent English literature, and his warm sympathies and sensitive heart enabled him to enter fully into them. "The field of incidents," says Masson, "characters, sentiments, and imagined situations, within which the author moves, is a limited one, though there is great deftness of recombination within that horizon. . . . All Goldsmith's phantasies, whether in verse or prose—his *Vicar of Wakefield*, his *Traveller*, his *Deserted Village*, his *Good-Natured Man* and *She Stoops to Conquer*, and even the humorous sketches that occur in his *Essays* and *Citizen of the World*—are phantasies of what may be called *reminiscence*. Less than even Smollett did Goldsmith *invent*, if by invention we mean a projection of the imagination into vacant space, and a filling of portion after portion of that space, as by sheer bold dreaming, with scenery, events, and beings, never known before. He drew on the recollections of his own life, on the history of his own family, on the characters of his relatives, on whimsical incidents that happened to him in his Irish youth or

during his continental wanderings, on his experience as a literary drudge in London. . . . That of these elements he made so many charming combinations, really differing from each other, and all, though suggested by fact, yet being so sweetly in an ideal air, proved what an artist he was, and was better than much that is commonly called invention. In short, if there is a sameness of effect in Goldsmith's writings, it is because they consist of poetry and truth, humour and pathos, from his own life, and the supply from such a life as his was not inexhaustible."

Finally, there was in our author in spite of the incapacity manifested in the practical conduct of his own life, a fund of good sense, good feeling, and good taste which enabled him to see his experiences as they might present themselves to a clear and unbiased vision. In his books he disposes his pictures of men and things so that the reader catches in them the persistent facts of human nature. The same qualities enabled him to expose many of the limitations and absurdities of his own generation and mankind at large. Yet while noting the pettiness and follies of men and society, his kindly humour comprehends how these arise, and his own experiences and warm heart teach him to sympathize with the actors. Hence his charming urbanity and pleasant satire. In short, beauty of style, truth and freshness of matter, humour and pathos of the point of view, all combine to make Goldsmith's best works true classics.

The poetry of Goldsmith stands between the poetry of the earlier part of the 18th century and the poetry of the earlier years of the 19th century, not merely in time but in character. There was nothing revolutionary about Goldsmith's spirit or work, he accepted the standards of his day and cast his writings in the mould which the taste of some three generations dictated. But the natural bent of his own genius and, perhaps, the influence of changes which were in the air, gave to his poetry certain points of contact with the productions of a later era. The prevailing fashion favoured didactic poetry, and preferred that a poem should give expression to some abstract truth; it also imposed the heroic couplet as the proper form of such verse. Accordingly, both *The Traveller* and *The Deserted Village* have a purpose—the former to show that man's happiness does not depend upon external conditions, upon advantages of situation or government; the latter to expose the ill effects of wealth and luxury on genuine national prosperity. Even the brief sketch of the poet's life here given, suffices to show that his strength did not lie in profundity of thought or in reason-

ing power, and it is not surprising that the general truths which he attempts to exemplify in his two poems are not profound—at best, indeed, but half truths; nor does the train of argument by which he professes to establish them have any particular logical cogency. Fortunately, this does not much matter; for, whatever the writer may have thought, the true excellence of these works, and the impulse which gave them birth, were not of the head but the heart. Goldsmith, as we have seen, surpassed other men in the keenness of his sensibilities and the warmth of his sympathy. His heart was stronger than his head. And it is the very predominance of emotion and sentiment above intellect in these two poems that elevates them above the more purely intellectual poetry of their own century and approximates them to the work of a later generation.

Again, as to form, although Goldsmith adopts the favourite heroic measure, the couplet as written by him does not have some of the most characteristic peculiarities of the accepted model. Pope's couplets are striking, pointed, epigrammatic, each pair of lines stands out by itself. As we read, we note the smartness, the wit, the art of the writer, and often the lack of continuity. The couplets of the two poems before us are not characterized by this brilliancy; they flow sweetly and melodiously; we remember the passage, rather than the pair of lines. The verse is employed more for the purpose of musical effect than for rhetorical emphasis. We do not think of the writer but of the tenderness, sweetness, and pathos of his verse.

Then, in the subjects about which Goldsmith's sentiments gather, and which form the real substance of his verse, he has affinities with the poets who came after him. As already indicated, the substance of his best passages are not the maxims, and general truths of Pope—"What oft was thought, but ne'er so well expressed;" but feelings, scenes, persons, and all these drawn from his own direct experience. Hence a concreteness and realism in his work. It is true that Pope gives pictures of characters, and of contemporary life; but they are characters and scenes which belong to society in its more artificial aspects. Goldsmith deals with simpler themes, and with more natural and lower grades of society, in a way which approximates him to Burns and Wordsworth. To readers accustomed to these last-mentioned poets this realism may seem less apparent than a certain unreality and Arcadian prettiness in his pictures of humble scenes and personages. This artificiality marks the influence of his century, from which Goldsmith, of course, did not escape. But to understand the character of a poet's genius, we must

compare his works with what came before, not with what came after him.

The general characteristics of his poetry are well summed up by Campbell in his *Specimens of the British Poets*: "Goldsmith's poetry enjoys a calm and steady popularity. It inspires us, indeed, with no admiration of daring design or of fertile invention; but it presents, within its narrow limits, a distinct and unbroken view of poetical delightfulness. His descriptions and sentiments have the pure zest of nature. He is refined without false delicacy, and correct without insipidity. Perhaps there is an intellectual composure in his manner, which may in some passages be said to approach to the reserved and prosaic; but he unbends from this graver strain of reflection to tenderness, and even to playfulness, with an ease and grace almost exclusively his own, and connects extensive views of the happiness and interests of society with pictures of life that touch the heart by their familiarity. His language is certainly simple, though it is not cast in a rugged and careless mould. . . . His poetry is not that of impetuous but of contemplative sensibility; of a spirit breathing its regrets and recollections in a tone that has no dissonance with calm philosophical reflection. He takes rather elevated and speculative views of the causes of good and evil in society; at the same time the objects which are most endeared to his imagination are those of familiar and simple interest; and the domestic affections may be said to be the only genii of his romance."

BIBLIOGRAPHY (Useful Books). *Lives* by Forster, and by Prior; shorter sketches, by Austin Dobson (*Great Writers Series*), by Macaulay (*Biographical Essays*), by Leslie Stephen (*Dict. of Nat. Biography*). Works in five vols., ed. by Gibbs (*Bohn's Library*); in one vol., ed. by Masson (Macmillan's *Globe Series*); the poems included in these selections have been annotated repeatedly, among the best of these editions are *The Traveller*, ed. by Dr. Birkbeck Hill (*Clar. Press Series*), both poems by Dobson (*Clar. Press*), by Hales (*Longer English Poems*), by Rolfe (*Harper's*), by Barrett (Macmillan's *English Classics*). From these editions the annotations in the present volume have been largely drawn. Essays by Scott, Thackeray, Leigh Hunt, etc. A full bibliography is appended to *Goldsmith* in the *Great Writers Series*.

THE TRAVELLER.

According to Goldsmith in the Dedication, this poem was begun in Switzerland in 1755. It was published in Dec. 1764, and nine editions were issued during the lifetime of the author. Each of these editions contained amendments. "Between the first and last," says Forster, "thirty-six new lines had been added and fourteen cancelled." The text followed in the present volume is that of the 9th edition as reproduced by Gibbs, but all variants of any interest are given in the notes. It is quite possible that Goldsmith may have derived the idea of using the impressions of his continental tour as the subject of a poem, from Addison's similar, but vastly inferior, *Letter from Italy*.

Macaulay says of the plan: "No philosophical poem, ancient or modern, has a plan so noble, and at the same time so simple. An English wanderer, seated on a crag among the Alps, near the point where three great countries meet, looks down on the boundless prospect, reviews his long pilgrimage, recalls the variety of scenery, of climate, of government, of religion, of national character, which he has observed, and comes to the conclusion, just or unjust, that our happiness depends little on political institutions, and much on the temper and regulation of the mind." It will prove useful to the student to make an abstract of the poem, showing how in the pursuit of this plan, the poet's mind passes from topic to topic. Antithesis enters largely into the arrangement—a favourite rhetorical device in the 18th century, made natural, in this case, by the nature of the theme.

It is doubtful, however, if the plan is any large factor in the interest which *The Traveller* has for its readers, and, though manifestly faulty and defective, attraction it certainly does possess. The characterizations of the various communities seize happily some of the most obvious peculiarities that differentiate them from each other, and contain perhaps, as much truth as such necessarily superficial generalizations admit; then, such an idyllic picture as that in ll. 239-254, the description of Holland, the genuinely tender and pathetic introduction, and various other shorter passages, all contribute to the attractiveness of the whole. But, apart from these beauties in detail, the poem in general gives pleasure—a pleasure, as it seems to the present writer, in the main arising from style, from easy, felicitous, and condensed expression, and from the gentle and unobtrusive music of the verse. Mere style, apart from anything notable in thought, is a great power in

literature ; even in the province of prose it keeps books like Walton's *Angler* alive. It is necessarily still more potent in poetry, where the numerous and exacting technical conditions increase a hundredfold the difficulty of embodying ideas with perfect aptness and grace.

The general truth exemplified is probably but a second thought, resorted to in order to meet the poetic fashion of the time, and to give shape and structure to the impressions of travel left on the poet's mind. It was the desire to unburden himself of these impressions that was the real stimulus to the poet's creative imagination, and it is these descriptions of impressions, scenes, and feelings, that are of real poetic worth. It will be noted that man has a more prominent place in the poem than nature, or objects of art and curiosity, and that the descriptions whether of man or nature are generalized, not descriptions of particular individuals or definite localities. Some of these assertions, at least, would not be likely to hold of a descriptive poem of our own century ; a comparison in these respects may be profitably made between *The Traveller* and *Childe Harold*.

To *The Traveller*, Goldsmith prefixed the following dedication, addressed to his brother Henry, who was living as curate in Liscoy on forty pounds a year :

To the Rev. Henry Goldsmith :

DEAR SIR,

I am sensible that the friendship between us can acquire no new force from the ceremonies of a Dedication ; and perhaps it demands an excuse thus to prefix your name to my attempts, which you decline giving with your own. But as a part of this poem was formerly written to you from Switzerland, the whole can now, with propriety, be only inscribed to you. It will also throw a light upon many parts of it, when the reader understands that it is addressed to a man who, despising fame and fortune, has retired early to happiness and obscurity with an income of forty pounds a year.

I now perceive, my dear brother, the wisdom of your humble choice. You have entered upon a sacred office, where the harvest is great and the labourers are but few ; while you have left the field of ambition, where the labourers are many, and the harvest not worth carrying away. But of all kinds of ambition—what from the refinement of the times, from differing systems of criticism, and from the divisions of party—that which pursues poetical fame is the wildest.

Poetry makes a principal amusement among unpolished nations ; but in a country verging to the extremes of refinement, painting and music come in for a share. As these offer the feeble mind a less laborious entertainment, they at first rival poetry, and at length supplant her: they engross all that favour once shown to her ; and, though but younger sisters, seize upon the elder's birthright.

Yet, however this art may be neglected by the powerful, it is still in greater danger from the mistaken efforts of the learned to improve it. What criticisms have we not heard of late in favour of blank verse and pindaric odes, choruses, anapests and iambics, alliterative care and happy negligence ! Every absurdity has now a champion to defend it ; and as he is generally much in the wrong, so he has always much to say ; for error is ever talkative.

But there is an enemy to this art still more dangerous : I mean party. Party entirely distorts the judgment and destroys the taste. When the mind is once infected with this disease, it can only find pleasure in what contributes to increase the distemper. Like the tiger, that seldom desists from pursuing man after having once preyed upon human flesh, the reader who has once gratified his appetite with calumny, makes ever after the most agreeable feast upon murdered reputation. Such readers generally admire some half-witted thing, who wants to be thought a bold man, having lost the character of a wise one. Him they dignify with the name of poet: his tawdry lampoons are called satires ; his turbulence is said to be force, and his frenzy fire.

What reception a poem may find which has neither abuse, party, nor blank verse to support it, I cannot tell ; nor am I solicitous to know. My aims are right. Without espousing the cause of any party, I have attempted to moderate the rage of all. I have endeavoured to show that there may be equal happiness in states that are differently governed from our own ; that every state has a particular principle of happiness ; and that this principle in each may be carried to a mischievous excess. There are few can judge better than yourself how far these positions are illustrated in this Poem.

I am, Dear Sir,

Your most affectionate brother,

OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

1. **slow.** Dr. Johnson is reported by Boswell as narrating that Chamier asked Goldsmith what he meant by *slow* here, “‘Did he mean tardiness of locomotion?’ Goldsmith, who would say something without consideration, answered, ‘Yes.’ I was sitting by, and said, ‘No, sir, you do not mean tardiness of locomotion; you mean that sluggishness of mind which comes upon a man in solitude.’” On this Forster, in his *Life of Goldsmith*, rightly remarks: “Who can doubt that he also meant slowness of motion? The first point of the picture is *that*. The poet is moving slowly, his tardiness of gait measuring the heaviness of heart, the pensive spirit, the melancholy, of which it is the outward expression and sign.”

2. **lazy Scheldt.** This river rises in France, and passes through Belgium and Holland on its way to the North Sea; *lazy* on account of its slow current.

wandering Po. *Winding* Po, the principal river of Northern Italy.

3. **Carinthia.** A province of Austria east of the Tyrol. Goldsmith “gave as a reason [for this unfavourable representation of the Carinthians] his being once, after a fatiguing day’s walk, obliged to quit a house he had entered for shelter, and pass part or whole of the night in seeking another.” (Prior’s *Goldsmith*.)

3-4. “This is one of the six couplets in the poem with imperfect rhymes; the others are lines 21-22, 79-80, 151-152, 243-244, 379-380. Of these six, four are perfect to the eye. Even Pope and Gray were far less accurate in this respect.” (Dr. Birkbeck Hill.)

5. **Campania’s plain.** The poet seems to refer to the Campagna di Roma, the flat region about Rome,—in ancient times very fertile and densely populated, now, on account of its malaria, but sparsely inhabited. *Campania* is properly the ancient name of a district farther south, in which the modern Naples lies.

8. **My heart untravell’d.** *Heart* is emphatic,—the poet’s warmest affections are centred about home.

9-10. “The farther I travel I feel the pain of separation with stronger force; those ties that bind me to my native country and you are still unbroken. By every remove I only drag a greater length of chain.” (*Citizen of the World*, iii.)

11. **crown.** This is not an assertion, but the expression of a wish.
my earliest friend. His brother.

13-22. Compare with this picture of his brother's home the description in *The Deserted Village*, ll. 149-162.

14. trim. "Trim is not used of a fire, so far as I know, by any author earlier than Goldsmith. He uses it again in *The Hermit*, st. xii." (Dr. Birkbeck Hill.)

17. In the first five editions the line reads: "feasts where mirth and peace abound." *Crown* is a favourite word with Goldsmith, and is used repeatedly in his two great poems. Cf. Psalm ciii., 4: "Who crownest thee with loving kindness and tender mercies."

24. **My prime of life.** Goldsmith was about twenty-seven years old at the period when he was literally a traveller. The phrase is not, therefore, to be taken in its usual sense as referring to the middle years of life, but in the sense in which Johnson defines *prime*, as "the spring of life; the height of health, strength, or beauty."

26. **view.** The appearance only.

27. **circle, etc.** The horizon.

27-28. Compare *Vicar of Wakefield*, ch. 29: "Death, the only friend of the wretched, for a little while mocks the weary traveller with the view, and like his horizon, still flies before him."

26-30. Goldsmith gives expression to the same ideas in *A Letter from a Traveller*, in *The Bee*, No. 1: "When will my restless disposition give me leave to enjoy the present hour? When at Lyons, I thought all happiness lay beyond the Alps; when in Italy, I found myself still wanting in something, and expected to leave a solitude behind me by going into Roumelia; and now you find me turning back, still expecting ease everywhere but where I am."

33. Cf. *Deserted Village*, ll. 189-190.

36. The dwellings and appurtenances both of kings and of shepherds.

39-40. In the first edition, these two lines read:

'Twere affectation all, and school-taught pride,
To spurn the splendid things by heaven supplied.

41. **school-taught pride.** Mark Pattison, in a note on Pope's *Essay on Man*, ii., 81, "Let subtle schoolmen," etc., says: "In the narrower sense *schoolmen* means the philosophic divines of the middle ages. Here it is to be taken in the wider sense, all who treat of morals in a technical way proper for the schools and not for the public." The philosophic *school* to which the poet's language would best apply is the Stoic.

42. **little man.** *Little* is here an epithet of men in general, not of any class of men.

48. **swains.** This word, the regular poetical expression for *peasant* in the 18th century, gives a touch of artificiality.

48. **dress.** Cf. Genesis, ii., 15: "And the Lord took the man and put him into the Garden of Eden to *dress* it."

55. **passions.** In its broader sense—*feelings*.

57. **prevails.** Overcomes the happier "passion" indicated in l. 56.

sorrows fall. Sorrow comes upon me; or, better, the *signs* of sorrow, *i.e.*, tears, fall.

60. **consigned.** Assigned, appropriated.

63-64. The ellipsis of the essential fact, subsequently brought out (that opinions differ as to what is the happiest spot), makes this couplet illogical. The fact that all claim to know the happiest spot does not, in itself, make the finding of the spot difficult.

64. **pretend.** As used here does not, as in present English, imply that the claim is consciously false. Cf. the French *prétendre*.

69. **the line.** The Equator.

70. **palmy wine.** Wine made from the juice of palms.

75-80. These lines contain the thesis which the remainder of the poem illustrates and develops. The first edition reads:

And yet, perhaps, if states with states we scan,
Or estimate their bliss on Reason's plan,
Though patriots flatter, and though fools contend,
We still shall find uncertainty suspend,
Find that each good, by art or nature given,
To these or those but makes the balance even.
Find that the bliss of all is much the same,
And patriotic boasting Reason's shame.

81-98. What is the relation of this paragraph to the preceding?

84. **Idra's cliffs.** There is an Idra or Idria in Austria, famous for its quicksilver mines; but Dr. Birkbeck Hill is of opinion that Goldsmith is thinking of Lake Idro in Northern Italy. Its shores are rocky cliffs, and the allusion in other respects is more apposite than to Idria.

84. **Arno's shelvy side.** The Arno is the well-known river of Tuscany on which Florence stands.

90. **either.** Used here improperly of one of several things. "But, perhaps," says Prof. Hales, "*either* may be justified here by supposing the 'blessings' just enumerated to be considered as divided in a two-fold manner: (i) the one prevailing; (ii) the others, which are cast into the shade by the prevailing one."

95. The poet considers each nation dominated by the pursuit of some one end, just as Pope (*Moral Essays*, i.) finds in each individual a "ruling passion."

98. **peculiar pain.** The pain which is the natural and necessary accompaniment of the particular good. Cf. Lat. *peculium*, *peculiaris*.

100. Let us exemplify them by an examination of the countries which lie before us.

101. **proper.** Own; cf. *property*, and Lat. *proprius*.

108. The comparison is with the rising tiers of seats in the ancient theatre. Cf. Virgil, *Aeneid*, v., 288, and *Paradise Lost*, iv., 140:—

A sylvan scene, and, as the ranks ascend
Shade above shade, a woody theatre
Of stateliest view.

119. **own the kindred soil.** Their luxuriance shows that the soil is naturally suited to them. This poetical license of putting the predicate adjective in the attributive place is called by the old rhetoricians *prolepsis*.

120-121. An example of the over-artificial treatment of nature which is characteristic of earlier 18th century poetry. The expression, instead of making us see or feel more vividly the natural fact referred to, seems to make it more remote and unreal.

123-144. Observe the relationship of this paragraph with the preceding, and how the poet maintains a similar arrangement in the descriptions which follow.

123. **sense.** The senses.

127. **manners.** Not in the narrow sense in which the word is most frequently employed at the present time, but *habits of life*, Lat. *mores*. Cf. Wordsworth's line:

And give us manners, virtue, freedom, power.

129. **zealous.** Evidently here used in a religious sense.

133-134. In the 14th and 15th centuries Italian republics, Venice, Florence, etc., were the leading commercial states in Europe; see *Childe Harold*, iv. ll. 14-18 and 430-432.

136. **long-fall'n.** Since the days of ancient Rome. The interest in the remains of classical antiquity was strong in Renaissance times.

sought the skies. Was again placed so that it stood upright.

137. **warm.** Like *glowed* refers to intensity of colour in the painting.

138. The statues are regarded by the poet as already existing in the marble before the sculptor has cut them out. In order to escape the repetition of the same idea involved in "pregnant" and "teem'd," it has been suggested that "teem'd with human form" refers to the multitude of workmen engaged in the quarries. This, to say the least, is highly improbable.

140. "Two of the main causes, certainly, of the decay of Italian commerce were the discovery of America and that of the sea route to India." (Hales.) The date of the latter discovery is 1498.

142. **unmann'd.** Not in its ordinary sense, but *deprived of inhabitants*.

144. **plethoric ill.** Ill arising from plethora. Cf. *Deserted Village*. ll. 389-394, and *Citizen of the World*, i.: "In short, the state resembled one of those bodies bloated with disease, whose bulk is only a symptom of its wretchedness; their former opulence only rendered them more impotent."

149-152. In these lines the poet gives an example of the "wrecks of former pride." The ancient Romans delighted in spectacular amusements; but these were on a grand scale, their triumphal processions celebrated splendid victories. Modern Italians preserve the same taste, but in a more trivial form, e.g., the masquerades of the carnival, and other festal seasons, or the processions on holy days connected with religious observances. "The triumph and the cavalcade" of line 150 probably refer to one and the same sort of celebration. *Pasteboard* is suggested by the material frequently employed for various purposes on such occasions, and together with "bloodless," of line 149, serves to emphasize the contrast with the ancient "triumphs," which are supposed to be present in the reader's mind.

151. **love.** There seems to be no very definite reference here; probably the poet has in mind the opportunities afforded by masques for furthering love intrigues.

That a procession should be celebrated from motives of piety is certainly no illustration of degeneracy; the ideas present to the poet are probably (1st) the tawdry character of these processions; (2nd) the superficial character of the religious feeling which prompts the celebration; this latter point seems to be further emphasized by the conjunction of "mistress" and "saint" in the next line. Both these aspects of the religious processions are illustrated by the lines which Browning in *Up at a Villa—Down in the City*, puts in the mouth of an Italian:—

Noon strikes,—here sweeps the procession! our Lady borne smiling and smart,
With a pink gauze gown all spangles, and seven swords stuck in her heart!
Bang—whang—whang goes the drum, tootle-te-tootle the fife;
No keeping one's haunches still: it's the greatest pleasure in life.

152. This line cannot be said to give an illustration of ll. 145-146. The poet forgets his special purpose, remembers only that he is exemplifying the frivolity of the modern Italian.

154. In the first edition, after this line followed:

At sports like these, while foreign arms advance,
In passive ease they leave the world to chance;
When struggling Virtue sinks by long control,
She leaves at last, or feebly mans the soul.

In the second to the fifth editions the last two lines were:

When noble aims have suffer'd long control,
They sink at last, or feebly man the soul.

157. **succeeding fast behind.** Taking the place of the "nobler aims."

158. **happier.** These delights, in virtue of their meanness, give greater enjoyment to degraded minds, than nobler aims would afford.

159. **domes.** "Johnson defines *dome* in its primary meaning as 'a building, a house.' Compare in the *Vanity of Human Wishes*, l. 139:—

O'er Bodley's dome his future labours spread.

There is no dome, *i.e.* cupola, in the Bodleian Library." (Dr. Birkbeck Hill.) Cf. *Deserted Village*, l. 319. So Coleridge:

In Xanadu did Kubla Khan
A stately pleasure-dome decree.

164. **owns his cottage with a smile.** Instead of being ashamed of his cottage, he acknowledges it to be his with a smile of satisfaction.

167. **bleak.** The epithet is transferred from the country to the inhabitants. The original sense of the word is *pale, colourless*; here used in its secondary sense, *cheerless*.

mansions. Dwelling-places; one would expect the singular, but perhaps the poet is thinking of the mountains. The word is a favourite one with Goldsmith, as is illustrated in these two poems.

170. "From the fifteenth century downwards the Swiss were the chief mercenary soldiers of Europe." (Hales.) In *Hamlet*, iv., 5, the king cries: "Where are my Switzers?" and in the time of the French Revolution we find Swiss mercenaries bravely defending Louis XVI. Switzerland does not produce iron; nor is it necessary to suppose that Goldsmith thought so; "man and steel," may be taken together as expressing one idea,—soldiers.

Naturally enough, the poet, who, to exemplify his general thesis, is contrasting the disadvantages of Swiss climate, soil, etc., with the compensating advantages which these produce upon the character of the inhabitants, does not dwell on the beautiful and attractive aspects of Swiss scenery. But it is also probable that Goldsmith did not appreciate these. The beauty of wild and rugged landscape was but little apparent to earlier generations. Ruskin says (*Modern Painters*, vol. iii.), "Every Homeric landscape, intended to be beautiful, is composed of a fountain, a meadow, and a shady grove;" and maintains that the mediæval mind agreed with the ancients "in holding that flat land, brooks, and groves of aspen compose the pleasant places of the earth, and that rocks and mountains are, for inhabitation, altogether to be reprobated and detested." In the latter part of the 18th century the modern sense for the picturesque developed rapidly, but does not show itself markedly in literature until after Goldsmith's time; and it is quite in harmony with what we know of his character, that he should not sympathize with the new taste. "Goldsmith," says Macaulay, *Hist. of Eng.*, chap. 13, "was one of the very few Saxons who, more than a century ago, ventured to explore the Highlands. He was disgusted by the hideous wilderness, and declared that he greatly preferred the charming country round Leyden, the vast expanse of verdant meadow, and the villas with their statues and grottoes, trim flower-beds, and rectilinear avenues."

176. **Redress.** Make amends for the defects of the climate; cf. l. 214, and *Deserted Village*, l. 422.

178. Rolfe cites a parallel passage from Caesar, *Bell. Gall.* vi.: "Cum suas quisque opes cum potentissimis aequari videat."

181. **costly.** Here *living at great cost*.

183-184. These two lines may be explained by making *he* the subject of "fits," "him" being used for *himself*, and construing "wish" as the object of "contracting". The more probable explanation is that "calm" belongs to "him," and "contracting" is intransitive; the narrowing down of his desires adapts the peasant to his surroundings.

187. **patient angle.** Epithet transferred from the angler to his apparatus; a similar transference in the next line.

188. **to the steep.** The edge of a precipice; hence the venturousness.

190. **savage.** Now used only of human creatures, but in this passage of a beast. Cf. Pope, *Iliad* xviii., 373, where speaking of a lion, he says:

When the grim savage, to his rifled den
So late returning, snuffs the track of men.

191. **sped.** *Finished*, a secondary sense, the original idea of celerity having vanished altogether. Cf. Pope, *Prologue to the Satires*:

A dire dilemma! Either way I'm sped!
If foes, they write; if friends, they read, me dead.

Compare the same variations of meaning in *dispatched*.

191-198. The picture of a simple household around the evening fire is a favourite one with Goldsmith, cf. ll. 13-22, *Deserted Village*, 155-160. Similar descriptions are to be found in Thomson's *Winter*, l. 311, Gray's *Elegy*, l. 21, and Burns' *Cotter's Saturday Night*, l. 19.

198. **nightly.** *For the night*; not, as usual, *for a series of nights*. Cf. Milton, *Il Penseroso*, 84: "To bless the doors from nightly harm;" *Othello*, iv., 3: "Give me my nightly wearing."

203. **conforms.** Adapts itself. His desires and pleasures are modest and limited, as his house.

205-208. There is a lack in the parallelism here; the mountain "lifts him to the storms," whereas the mother protects the child from the "scaring sounds."

215. **science.** *Science* means knowledge originally, and in the 18th century was much more comprehensively used than at present.

216. **supplies.** *Gratifies* the desire.

217-218. Dr. Birkbeck Hill aptly quotes to illustrate these lines a passage from Milton's *Sonnet to Mr. Lawrence* :

What neat repast shall feast us, light and choice,
Of Attic taste, with wine, whence we may rise
To hear the lute well touch'd, or artful voice
Warble immortal notes and Tuscan air ?

219. those powers. Poetry, music, painting, etc.

221. level. *Monotonous*, with, perhaps, the additional idea of a life led upon a lower plain as contrasted with a life of elevation, of high pursuits and aims.

229. refinement. Culture.

230. manners. See note, l. 127.

232. Fall. There are *two* darts,—love's and friendship's.

234. cow'ring. No idea of fear implied here ; this is rare, but the *Oxford Dictionary* quotes an example of a similar use of the word from Bacon's *Sylva Sylvarum*, § 155.

243-254. George Primrose in the *Vicar of Wakefield* tells of similar experiences : "I passed among the harmless peasants of Flanders, and among such of the French as were poor enough to be very merry ; for I found them sprightly in proportion to their wants. Whenever I approached a peasant's house towards nightfall, I played one of my most merry tunes, and that procured me not only a lodging but subsistence for the next day."

244. tuneless pipe. The fault was not in the pipe ; this is a poetical way of saying that his musical skill was defective ; see below, ll. 247-248.

Loire. A river in the central part of France flowing into the Bay of Biscay.

251. Alike all ages. In their fondness for dancing.

253. gestic lore. Knowledge of dancing ; *gestic* cognate with gesture, gesticulate, etc.

255-266. The French are a social people, and desire above all things the approbation of their fellows ; each man seeks to please the other, and, to win praise, gives praise. Hence a general diffusion of happiness.

256. idly busy. An example of the figure oxymoron. Cf. Hor. *Epod.*, i., 11, 28 : "Strenua nos exercet inertia."

rolls their world away. Cf. *Hamlet*, iii., 2 : "Thus runs the world away."

258. "The disposition of the mind, in the daily intercourse of men, is formed by a regard to reputation." (Dr. Birkbeck Hill.)

273. **with tawdry art, etc.** By the exhibition of showy but superficial attractions strives to win, etc.

276. **frieze.** A kind of coarse cloth, very ill-suited for making "robes," *i.e.*, garments of ceremony.

277-278. Daily meals are stinted in order that means may be provided for giving a fine entertainment.

281. Italy and France have been represented as within view of the poet sitting on a peak of the Alps, but the more distant Holland he visits in fancy.

284. The fact that the level of the sea is higher than that of the land in some parts of Holland suggests the metaphor "leans."

286. **rampire.** A variant of rampart. Cf. Shakespeare *Timon*, v., 5 : "Our rampired gates."

artificial pride. The bank raised by art overtops and *looks down* upon the sea.

290. **Scoops out.** This scarcely seems a suitable description of the effect of the dike ; but the idea before the poet's mind is not the *action* of scooping but the *result*, *viz.*, the hollow, empty piece of land which had, before the building of the dike, been filled with water.

usurps the shore. Cf. *Deserted Village*, l. 63.

291. "The whole kingdom of Holland seems to be a conquest on the sea, and in a manner rescued from its bosom. The surface of the earth in this country is below the level of the bed of the sea ; and I remember upon approaching the coast to have looked down upon it from the sea as into a valley." (*Animated Nature*.)

292. **amphibious,** because the land really belongs to the sea, or, as Dr. Hill thinks, "because with its vales and canals it partakes of two natures."

293. **yellow-blossom'd.** "Marshy land near rivers or canals produces a quantity of yellow flowers, as the ranunculus or king cup, the marsh marigold, etc." (Barrett.)

297. **wave-subjected** may mean (i) in its more primary sense, placed under the level of the waves ; (ii) exposed to the power of the wave, *i.e.*, subject to inundations. The latter interpretation suits better the next line.

303. **Are.** The plural is grammatically incorrect.

306-312. "In Asia I find the Dutch the great lords of all the Indian seas ; in Europe the timid inhabitants of a paltry state. No longer the sons of freedom, but of avarice ; no longer the assertors of their rights by courage, but by negotiations ; fawning on those who insult them, and crouching under the rod of every neighbouring power." (*Citizen of the World*, Let. 55.)

"Now the possessor of accumulated wealth, when furnished with the necessities and pleasures of life, has no other method to employ the superfluity of his fortune but in purchasing power ; that is, differently speaking, in making dependants, by purchasing the liberty of the needy or the venal, of men who are willing to bear the mortification of contiguous tyranny for bread." (*Vicar of Wakefield*, ch. xix.)

310.

Peep about

To find ourselves dishonourable graves.

(*Julius Caesar*, i., 2, 137.)

313-316. Caesar includes under the *Belgae* a number of tribes inhabiting the country between the Rhine, Seine, and Marne. The poet had, doubtless, in his mind only a vague remembrance of the warlike character of these peoples ; but Caesar's description (quoted by Dr. Hill) of one of these tribes, the Nervii, affords a striking contrast to Goldsmith's picture of the Dutch : "Nullum aditum esse ad eos mercatoribus ; nihil pati vini reliquarumque rerum ad luxuriam pertinentium inferri, quod iis rebus relanguescere animos et remitti virtutem existimarent : esse homines feros magnaeque virtutis, increpitare atque incusare reliquos Belgas, qui se populo Romano dedidissent patriamque virtutem projecissent." (*Bell. Gall.* ii., 15.)

316. "This weak line is introduced for the sake of the transition from one part of the poem to another." (Dr. Hill.)

317. **my genius spreads her wing.** *Genius* would more properly be represented as masculine, but the "genius" in this case is the poetic muse who is, of course, a feminine impersonation.

318, etc. In *The Citizen of the World*, letter civ., "the vernal softness of the air, the verdure of the fields, the transparency of the streams," are mentioned as characteristic of Britain.

319. *lawns*. The poet is not thinking of *lawns* in the usual modern sense, but in the more original signification of open grassy spaces between woods. Cf. *Deserted Village*, l. 35.

Arcadian. Arcadia was the central part of the Peloponnesus, and a pastoral country. It was the favourite scene of pastoral poetry and pastoral romance, and so, in time, Arcadia came to be the proper appellation for an imaginary land of ideal poetic beauty.

320. *fam'd Hydaspes*. The classic name for one of the rivers of the Panjaub, now the Jelum. Many marvellous tales were connected with it, hence "fam'd." Cf. Hor. *Odes*, i., 22:

Quae loca fabulosus Lambit Hydaspes.

324. Hales and Rolfe interpret this line as meaning that extremes of climate are known there only in imagination. But Hill and Barrett are undoubtedly right in understanding the line to mean that while there are no extremes in the climate, there are extremes ("excesses, views or feelings which transgress moderation") in the character of the typical Englishman, as the following passage exemplifies.

325-335. "We talked of Goldsmith's *Traveller*, of which Dr. Johnson spoke highly; and while I was helping him on with his great-coat, he repeated from it the character of the British nation, which he did with such energy that the tear started in his eye." (Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, vol. v.)

325-326. Each man is governed by the dictates of reason, which prescribes great and daring aims, though at variance with conventional usages and ordinary ways of thinking. This sense of "irregularity" seems to be confirmed by line 330.

327. "Pride seems the source not only of the national vices of Englishmen, but of their national virtues also." (*Citizen of the World*, iv.)

port. *Bearing*; Cf. Gray's *Bard*:

Her lion port, her awe-commanding face.

332. **True to imagin'd right.** True to what he believes to be right.

333-334. "The lowest mechanic looks upon it as his duty to be a watchful guardian of his country's freedom, and often uses a language that might seem haughty, even in the mouth of the great emperor who traces his ancestry to the moon." (*Citizen of the World*, iv.)

boasts these rights to scan. Boasts that he examines and discusses these rights.

339-342. "Sir," said Johnson, "two men of any other nation who are shown into a room together, at a house where they are both visitors, will immediately find some conversation. But two Englishmen will probably go each to a different window, and remain in obstinate silence. Sir, we as yet do not enough understand the common rights of humanity." (Boswell's *Johnson*, vol. iv.)

341-342 are wanting in the 1st ed., and the following line reads :

See, though by circling deeps together held.

Line 342 reads in the 2nd ed.: "All kindred claims that soften life," etc.

345. *The Traveller* was published at the period of the agitation connected with Wilkes.

imprison'd. "Imprisoned in an island." (Hill.) "Restrained within the bounds of law." (Rolfe.) The latter interpretation seems nearer the mark, but the restraints should not be limited to legal ones, but to the checks exerted by one faction on another, etc.

346. "Perhaps this refers to the Jacobite invasions." (Hill.) Barrett's interpretation is better, that this line "is pretty nearly a repetition of l. 345 with the difference, perhaps, that instead of referring to *factions*, 'represt ambition' relates to individuals."

round her shore is used vaguely for *in the country*, and does not imply that the struggles take place outside the shore line; cf. l. 397 below.

347-348. The political system breaks down, or becomes unmanageable.

349. **As Nature's ties decay.** In the 1st ed., "As social bonds decay."

351. **Fictitious.** Factitious, artificial. Goldsmith's meaning in this line may be exemplified from chap. xix. of the *Vicar of Wakefield*: "The very laws of this country may contribute to the accumulation of wealth; as when, by their means, the natural ties that bind the rich and poor together are broken, and it is ordained that the rich shall only marry with the rich; or when the learned are held unqualified to serve their country as counsellors, merely from a defect of opulence, and wealth is thus made the object of a wise man's ambition."

357. **noble stems.** Aristocratic families.

358. In the first ed. read: "And monarchs toil, and poets pant," etc.

wrote. A common form of the perfect participle in the 18th century and earlier.

362. After this line the following couplet was inserted in the 1st ed. :

Perish the wish, for, inly satisfied,
Above their pomp I hold my ragged pride.

363-380. These lines are not in the 1st ed. Goldsmith (*Vicar of Wakefield*, chap. xix.) puts a similar statement of his political views into the mouth of the Vicar, and this should be read in connection with these paragraphs of *The Traveller*. He here states that he believes in liberty, but not in the domination of any one class, either the masses, or the aristocracy. All men are originally equal, but naturally fall into classes, some higher, some lower, each of which has its function, and its rights which must be respected.

367-368. True freedom may be injured by being too much repressed, or, on the other hand, by being allowed to develop into licence and anarchy.

374. After this line, in eds. two to five, followed :

Much on the low, the rest as rank supplies,
Should in columnar diminution rise.

377-392. For a long period after the accession of the House of Hanover, the government of England was virtually in the hands of a few great Whig families. When, however, in 1760, George III. came to the throne, he attempted to make himself the actual as well as the nominal head of the government. He tried to provide ministers dependent not on some leading statesman, but upon himself; invited Tories to take office; and so entered into a contest with the Whig aristocracy. This struggle, described by Burke in his pamphlet *On the Present Discontents*, was being fought out at the time *The Traveller* was written and published, and to this struggle the paragraph before us refers. Goldsmith's sympathies were Tory, and were with the king, as is shown not only here, but in chap. xix. of *The Vicar of Wakefield*.

378. a part. A section of the community; in this case, as indicated in ll. 381-4, the Whig leaders.

aspires. Soars, rises. So used literally of a building in Johnson's *London*, l. 204 :

Orgilio sees the golden pile aspire.

381-384. This gives Goldsmith's view of the attempt on the part of the Whig aristocracy to make itself supreme in political matters, with the professed aim of maintaining liberty. Cf. *Citizen of the World*, 49: "As

the Roman senators by slow and imperceptible degrees became masters of the people, yet still flattered them with a show of freedom, while themselves only were free; so is it possible for a body of men, while they stand up for privileges, to grow into an exuberance of power themselves, and the public become actually dependent, while some of its individuals only governed." Cf., also, his preface to the *History of England*: "It is not yet decided in politics whether the diminution of kingly power in England tends to increase the happiness or freedom of the people. For my own part, from seeing the bad effects of the tyranny of the great in those republican states that pretend to be free, I cannot help wishing that our monarchs may still be allowed to enjoy the power of controlling the encroachments of the great at home."

385-386. The Tories who had for years been in opposition, naturally took an unfavourable view of recent legislation, but in the matter of penal statutes, such a view was amply justified. Lecky says: "It was the constant practice of parliament in the eighteenth century, when new offences arose or when old offences assumed a new prominence, to pass special acts making them capital. Hence an enormous and undigested multiplication of capital offences, which soon made the criminal code a mere sanguinary chaos. Previous to the Revolution the number in the statute-book is said not to have exceeded fifty. During the reign of George II. sixty-three new ones were added." (*Hist. of Eng.*, chap. xxiii., which may be consulted for fuller information.) Cf. *Vicar of Wakefield*: "Our possessions are paled up with new edicts every day, and hung round with gibbets to scare every invader."

"By 'each wanton judge' is perhaps meant the lord chancellor of the Whig government for the time being, who was responsible for the new statutes which were made by parliament." (Dr. Hill's note.)

387-388. Goldsmith refers to the employment of wealth, obtained in India and elsewhere, for the purchase of voters and seats in parliament. "In the first decade of George III. also, the nabobs or Indian adventurers, who had returned in great numbers laden with the spoils of Hindostan, began to appear prominently in English political life. At the end of 1767, Chesterfield being desirous of bringing his son into parliament at the approaching election, offered a borough-jobber 2,500*l* for a secure seat, but was told 'that there was no such thing as a borough to be had now, for that the rich East and West Indians had secured them all at the rate of 3,000*l* at least, but many at 4,000*l*, and two or three that he knew at 5,000*l*.' 'For some years past,' said

Chatham, in one of his speeches in 1770, 'there has been an influx of wealth into this country which has been attended with many fatal consequences, because it has not been the regular, natural product of labour and industry. The riches of Asia have been poured in upon us, and have brought with them not only Asiatic luxury, but, I fear, Asiatic principles of government. Without connections, without any natural interest in the soil, the importers of foreign gold have forced their way into parliament by such a torrent of private corruption as no private hereditary fortune could resist.' . . . Clive himself at one time brought no less than five members into parliament." (Lecky's *England*, chap. xi.)

391. Half from patriotic motives, half from fear of growing evils. This is not logically expressed; the "fear" is also a patriotic motive.

392. "The generality of mankind also are of my way of thinking, and have unanimously created one king, whose election at once diminishes the number of tyrants, and puts tyranny at the greatest distance from the greatest number of people." (*Vicar of Wakefield*, chap. xix.) Again in the same chapter: "If there be anything sacred amongst men, it must be the anointed Sovereign of his people, and every diminution of his power in war or peace is an infringement on the real liberties of the subject."

395. "The king is the fountain of honour." (Bacon, *Of a King*.)

396. Gave wealth the power of swaying, etc.

397, foll. This contains the theme which is expanded in *The Deserted Village*; cf. especially l. 51 foll. of the latter poem. Goldsmith's idea is that the accumulation of large fortunes in the hands of individuals led ultimately to the depopulation of the country. These wealthy men bought large landed estates, not to obtain a return from them through agriculture, but merely for purposes of ostentation and pleasure. They accordingly deprived the peasantry of their holdings, and turned cultivated fields into parks and pleasure-grounds. Compare the more recent depopulation of the Highlands of Scotland, often ascribed to the formation of huge reserves for deer-shooting.

round. Cf. l. 346 above.

399. Her foreign conquests brought into existence the Indian nabobs, for example, who were among the principal buyers of these large estates.

411. *Oswego*. A river in the State of New York, emptying into Lake Ontario. Dr. Hill says: "Fort Oswego, close to Lake Ontario,

was taken by the French in 1756. In a plan of it in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1757 (p. 79), a large swamp is marked. In the general conquest of Canada, in 1759, it came again into the power of the English."

412. **Niagara.** It will be noted that the accent here is on the penultimate ; this was the original pronunciation.

413-422. Cf. *Deserted Village*, ll. 341-362.

418. **distressful.** Causing distress.

420. This line, lines 429-434, and 437-438 were, according to Boswell, written by Dr. Johnson.

421. Gazes eastward.

422. The emigrant is, of course, not represented as knowing anything of Goldsmith's feelings ; the line merely means that the same sentiments spring up in the exile's breast, as the author expresses in this poem.

423. Lines 361-422 are a digression, the poet now returns to his theme. His review of various countries, begun at l. 105, has shown that in each good and evil are combined, and made good the idea expressed in ll. 75-80. Hence there is no "happiest spot below." He now asserts that happiness depends, not on external surroundings, but on the mind,—on temperament and self-control.

427. Johnson gives expression to similar thoughts elsewhere : "The good or ill success of battles and embassies extends itself to a very small part of domestic life ; we all have good and evil, which we feel more sensibly than our petty part of public miscarriage and prosperity." (Letter of Dec. 21, 1762, quoted in Boswell's *Life*.)

431-432. Cf. "Caelum, non animum, mutant qui trans mare currunt." (Hor. *Epist.* I., 11, 27.)

The mind in its own place and in itself
Can make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven.

(*Par. Lost*, i. 254.)

If then to all men happiness was meant,
God in externals could not place content.

(Pope, *Essay on Man*, iv. 65.)

consign'd may be construed either with "we" or "felicity." In the former case the meaning is that we are consigned to our own care, and control our own destiny ; in the latter case, our happiness is everywhere placed in our own hands.

435. *agonizing wheel*. The wheel was a barbarous instrument of punishment formerly employed in France and Germany. "Agonizing" is used here in the sense of causing agony, although properly agonize means to struggle intensely, to *feel* agony.

436. "Two brothers, George and Luke Dosa, headed a rebellion in Hungary in 1514. George, not Luke, was punished by his head being encircled with a red-hot iron crown. . . . Damiens, a madman, had, in 1757, made an attempt on the life of the King of France. For this he was put to death with the most infernal cruelties that the science of man could devise. Goldsmith, it is reported, said that by the 'bed of steel' he meant the rack. But Mr. Austin Dobson quotes from Smollett's *History of England*, bk. iii. 7, 25: 'Being conducted to the conciergerie, an *iron bed*, which likewise served for a chair, was prepared for him, and to this he was fastened with chains.'" (Dr. Hill's note.)

THE DESERTED VILLAGE.

First published May, 1770; seven editions appeared in the author's life-time. As in *The Traveller*, the text here given is that of Prior.

The theory advanced in this poem, that wealth is a cause of depopulation, is, if regard be had to the whole country, contradicted by facts, although it may hold with regard to rural districts. Macaulay maintains, further, that the picture in which Goldsmith exemplifies it, had no parallel in reality: "It is made up of incongruous parts. The village in its happy days is a true English village. The village in its decay is an Irish village. The felicity and the misery which Goldsmith has brought close together belong to two different countries, and to two different stages in the progress of society. He had assuredly never seen in his native island such a rural paradise, such a seat of plenty, content, and tranquillity as his Auburn. He had assuredly never seen in England all the inhabitants of such a paradise turned out of their homes in one day and forced to emigrate in a body to America. The hamlet he had probably seen in Kent; the ejection he had probably seen in Munster; but by joining the two he has produced something which never was and never will be seen in any part of the world." One of the more recent investigators, Mr. Lecky, thinks there was some basis, even in England, for the description (see note on ll. 63-64 below).

From the poetic point of view the existence or non-existence of the case does not much matter. Who cares if there were ever a Danish prince so subtle and acute as Hamlet? The poem appeals to us by embodying a universal feeling in a definite, concrete situation—the feeling of yearning and sweet melancholy that masters the heart when we think of scenes and associations connected with happy youthful days forever passed away. Both in Goldsmith's letters and in his published works, this feeling reappears again and again, and it was one which by temperament and circumstances he was well fitted to express. He had an unusually tender and sensitive heart; but, in mature years, was more than most men cut off from intimate sympathy. His bitter struggles, his boisterous pleasures, the restless rivalry of society, might well make him long for the affection and the calm of youthful days. The fact that in these later years he knew nothing of domestic happiness would tend to heighten, for his imagination, the ideal perfection of earlier times. No defects of experienced reality would hamper the fancy and check the flow of emotion. This feeling Goldsmith proceeds to embody in a concrete situation. In the case of the person who experiences an emotion, its strength overcomes the incongruities of the object with which it is associated. But the poet in order to incarnate this emotion for his readers, shapes the object into harmony with the predominating thought. The lover who gives vent to his enthusiasm in song does not put into his song the defects of his mistress, though he may be aware of their existence. To *him* they are as nothing in comparison with her perfections, but they might jar upon the reader and check the flow of aesthetic sympathy. Lissoy, doubtless, was shabby enough; but through associations it was for Goldsmith the symbol of happiness and content. Why should he not, in a purely imaginary picture, lend to Auburn an Arcadian loveliness which had no existence in the real prototype, unless as seen by the eyes of fondness through the softening atmosphere of years? Or suppose Lissoy had possessed all the beauty of Auburn, and had remained as fair and prosperous in Goldsmith's later years as in his boyhood, why should he not in his imaginary picture represent it as a deserted wilderness, if he could thereby more adequately embody his state of mind to the reader? The main element of the sadness with which we regard the scenes of the past is change; those whom we have known and loved are dead or gone, the old home has vanished, the garden is dismantled. All this is common enough; it would be sadder still if the change were more complete and the whole place a desolation. Why should not the poet intensify the effect of his poem by representing such a picture?

The Deserted Village is manifestly superior to *The Traveller*, not merely in finish of workmanship, but in more fundamental characteristics. The feeling of which we have spoken gives a unity of tone, to which nothing corresponds in the earlier poem; and the sincerity of this feeling in the poet enables him to touch the reader's heart. The unity which *The Traveller* possesses, is only, at best, a logical unity; the various passages form a whole in virtue of their being part of an argumentative scheme. The subject of *The Deserted Village* is a definite object. It is a more concrete and picturesque theme, and therefore has a greater hold on the imagination. Instead of the generalized descriptions of *The Traveller*, we have the image of a definite locality; instead of the characterization of nations, we have portraits of individuals. *The Deserted Village* "introduces us," as Forster says, "to beings with whom the imagination is ready to contract a friendship."

The success of this poem was great, and at its first appearance it won the approval of two men who were probably the most competent of living judges, Goethe and Gray. The latter on hearing the poem read, said emphatically: "This man is a poet," and Goethe, who had already fallen under the spell of the *Vicar*, tells us in his autobiography, how the enthusiasm with which he read it stimulated him to an attempt at translation.

The following dedicatory letter was prefixed by the author:

To Sir Joshua Reynolds:

DEAR SIR,

I can have no expectations in an address of this kind, either to add to your reputation or to establish my own. You can gain nothing from my admiration, as I am ignorant of that art in which you are said to excel; and I may lose much by the severity of your judgment, as few have a juster taste in poetry than you. Setting interest therefore aside, to which I never paid much attention, I must be indulged at present in following my affections. The only dedication I ever made was to my brother, because I loved him better than most other men. He is since dead. Permit me to inscribe this poem to you.

How far you may be pleased with the versification and mere mechanical parts of this attempt I don't pretend to inquire; but I know you will object—and indeed several of our best and wisest friends concur in the opinion—that the depopulation it deplores is nowhere to be seen, and the disorders it laments are only to be found in the poet's own imagination. To this I can scarce make any other answer than that I sincerely believe what I have written; that I have taken all possible

pains, in my country excursions for these four or five years past, to be certain of what I allege ; and that all my views and inquiries have led me to believe those miseries real which I here attempt to display. But this is not the place to enter into an inquiry whether the country be depopulating or not ; the discussion would take up much room, and I should prove myself, at best, an indifferent politician to tire the reader with a long preface when I want his unfatigued attention to a long poem.

In regretting the depopulation of the country, I inveigh against the increase of our luxuries ; and here I also expect the shout of modern politicians against me. For twenty or thirty years past it has been the fashion to consider luxury as one of the greatest national advantages ; and all the wisdom of antiquity, in that particular, as erroneous. Still, however, I must remain a professed ancient on that head, and continue to think those luxuries prejudicial to states by which so many vices are introduced and so many kingdoms have been undone. Indeed, so much has been poured out of late on the other side of the question, that merely for the sake of novelty and variety one would sometimes wish to be in the right.

I am, Dear Sir,

Your sincere friend, and ardent admirer,

OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

1. **Auburn.** Forster says that Bennet Langton suggested this name to the poet ; there is a village in Wiltshire named Aldbourn, or Auburn.

2. **swain.** See on *Traveller*, l. 48.

4. **parting.** *Departing*, as in Gray's *Elegy* : "The curfew tolls the knell of parting day ;" Milton's *Hymn on the Nativity*, l. 186 ; Shakespeare, *Coriolanus*, v., 6, etc.

5. **bowers.** Abodes ; the word is poetical.

7. **loiter'd.** Perhaps not in its ordinary meaning of "walked slowly over," but "dwelt with lingering gaze" ; cf. "Paused," l. 9.

12. "This corresponds with the church of Kilkenny West as seen from the house at Lissoy." (Dobson's note.)

decent. This word is applied in a narrow sphere at the present day, but originally it was used in a general way for what is comely (Lat. *decens* ; cf. Hor. *Od.* i., 4, 6), as in the present passage. Cf. Milton's *Penseroso* :

And sable stole of cypress lawn
Over thy decent shoulders drawn.

13. The hawthorn bush is another feature taken from the real village of Lissoy.

16. When the remission of toil permitted play to have its turn.

18. *Led up.* *Conducted* ; the phrase was doubtless suggested to the poet by the idea of dancing which was present in his mind ; cf. *Cit. of the World*, 114. "They advanced hand in hand . . . leading up a dance."

19. *circled.* Went round (cf. l. 22).

23. *still.* Without intermission.

25. *simply.* *In their artless fashion* ; their only way of showing their powers in dancing was by holding out, not by skill and grace.

27. *mistrustless.* Without suspicion. He is quite unconscious that his face is smutted.

35. What is the relation between the first two paragraphs of the poem?

lawn. The word is used vaguely here, and means no more than "grassy plain" ; see l. 1.

37. Dr. Strean, who succeeded Henry Goldsmith as curate in Lissoy, is reported as saying : "The poem of *The Deserted Village* took its origin from the circumstance of General Robert Napper . . . having purchased an extensive tract of the country surrounding Lissoy, or *Auburn* ; in consequence of which many families, here called cottiers, were removed to make room for the intended improvements of what was now to become the wide domain of a rich man, warm with the idea of changing the face of his new acquisition ; and were forced *with fainting steps* to go in search of *torrid tracts* and *distant climes*."

39. *One only.* Cf. *Julius Caesar*, i., 2, 157.

40. The fact that the plain is now only partially cultivated lessens its former luxuriance and beauty.

43. *glades.* Open spaces in a wood.

44. *bittern.* The name is applied to a genus of birds nearly allied to the heron. The bird is associated with lonely and desolate scenes, e.g., *Isaiah* xiv., 23 : "I will make it a possession for the bittern, and pools of water." Goldsmith, *Animated Nature*, vol. vi., says : "Those who have walked on an evening by the sedgy sides of an unfrequented river must remember a variety of notes from different water-fowl. . . But

of all these sounds there is none so hollow as the booming of the bittern. . . I remember in the place where I was a boy, with what terror this bird's note affected the whole village." Tennyson refers to the same bird (under the name of "butter-bump") in the *Northern Farmer* (*Old Style*); cf. also Scott, *Lady of the Lake*, i., 31.

45. **lapwing.** A species of plover which haunts marshy grounds. "When disturbed the female runs from the nest, while her mate, with devious flight and anxious cries, strives to divert attention from the nest."

51. The repetition of "ill" in this line is displeasing, and an instance of Goldsmith's occasional negligence.

52. **decay.** *Diminish in numbers*, as seems to be indicated by the general tenor of the poem.

53-56. For the sentiment compare Burns' *Cotter's Saturday Night* (1785): "Princes and lords are but the breath of kings," and his more familiar lines: "A prince can mak a belted knight. . . . But an honest man's aboon his might."

57-58. "Perhaps it was most nearly so in the 15th and 16th centuries." (Hale's note.)

59-62. Goldsmith here affords an example of the common tendency to idealize the past.

63-64. **trade's unfeeling train, etc.** Those who having become wealthy by trade buy the land for purposes of pleasure and display, and so drive out the small cultivators. Cf. *Traveller*, 397 foll., with note thereon. Lecky, *Hist. of Eng.*, chap. xxiii., quotes from a pamphlet published in 1786, in which the writer complains that "the landowner converts twenty small farms into about four large ones, and at the same time the tenants of these large farms are tied down in their leases not to plough any of the premises so let to farm, by which means [of] several hundred villages that forty years ago contained between 400 and 500 inhabitants, very few will now be found to exceed 80, and some not half that number; nay, some contain only one poor, old, decrepit man or woman hired by the occupiers of the land. . . . The young and healthy have dispersed themselves; those that could pay their passage having transported themselves to America."

65. **lawn.** See on l. 35.

66. **Unwieldy.** The epithet suggests the idea that there is too much wealth in the hands of one individual, who is unable to make much use

of it. So *cumbrous* indicates that the pomp is oppressive to the possessor, and perhaps also that the ostentatious mansion and other outward signs of pomp are only an incumbrance on the land and the community.

67. Artificial wants which are the outcome of wealth.

opulence. The first two editions read "luxury."

68. "Every annoyance which foolish and vain people suffer from injury to their pride." (Barrett's note.)

69. **plenty.** *Sufficiency*, as opposed to "opulence."

72. **Lived in each look.** "The salutary effects of these healthful sports were visible in the look of each player." (Barrett:)

74. **manners.** See on l. 127 of *The Traveller*.

80. After this line in the first three editions followed :

Here as with doubtful, pensive steps I range,
Trace every scene, and wonder at the change.

82. Cf. *Citizen of the World*, xlv. : "The remembrance of an evil carries in it nothing agreeable, and to remember a good is always accompanied with regret;" also *Locksley Hall* : "A sorrow's crown of sorrow is remembering happier things."

87. The first three editions read :

My anxious day to husband near the close.

95-96. "This thought," says Foster, "was continually at his heart. In his hardly less beautiful prose he has said the same thing more than once, for, as I have elsewhere remarked, no one ever borrowed from himself oftener or more unscrupulously than Goldsmith did." Cf. *Citizen of the World*, ciii. : "There is something so seducing in that spot where we first had existence, that nothing but it can please. Whatever vicissitudes we experience in life, however we toil, or where-soever we wander, our fatigued wishes still recur to home for tranquillity, we long to die in that spot which gave us birth, and in that pleasing expectation opiate every calamity."

98. **never must.** That are *fated* not to be mine.

99. **How happy.** "How blest is" in the first two editions.

103-106. The ideas are suggested by an implicit contrast with the wealthy usurpers of the land (see lines 63-64).

104. **tempt the dang'rous deep.** "A Latinism. Cf. Virgil, *Ecl.* iv., 32: 'temptare Thetim ratibus.'" (Rolfe.)

105. **guilty state.** The pomp and finery of the liveried porter are "guilty," because they are the result of the expenditure of money which might have been better employed in relieving the hunger of the suppliants.

107. **His latter end.** Biblical phrase: *Job* viii., 7; *Prov.* xix., 20, etc.

109. **Bends.** "Sinks" in the first ed.

unperceived, because so gradual. Cf. Johnson's *Vanity of Human Wishes*:

An age that melts in unperceived decay
And glides in modest innocence away.

114. This may have been suggested by a hill in front of Lissoy parsonage, to which Goldsmith refers in a letter dated 27th Dec., 1757: "I had rather be placed on the little mount before Lissoy gate, and there take in, to me, the most pleasing horizon in nature."

115. **careless.** Not meaning *indifferent*, but *free from care*; the epithet really belongs to the person, not to his steps.

117. Barrett quotes in illustration from *Guy Mannering*, chap. xli.: "He took his flageolet from his pocket, and played a simple melody. Apparently the tune awoke the corresponding associations of a damsel, who, close beside a fine spring about half way down the descent, and which had once supplied the castle with water, was engaged in bleaching linen, she immediately took up the song."

121. **bayed.** Barked at; cf. *Julius Caesar*, iv., 3: "I had rather be a dog and bay the moon."

126. **fluctuate.** Move as the waves (Lat. *fluctus*); rise and fall with the breeze.

128. **bloomy flush.** The reference in "flush" is not to colour, but to fulness, exuberance; "bloomy" is blooming, with the freshness of the blooming time, or of youth. Cf. Scott's *Heart of Mid-Lothian*: "I thought of the bonny bit thorn that our father rooted out o' the yard last May, when it had a' the flush of blossoms on it."

129. **thing.** This word when applied to persons usually indicates either pity or contempt, as in the common expression "poor thing,"

“malignant thing,” *Tempest*, i., 2, 256. In the passage before us, perhaps, the idea suggested is rather that of the utter insignificance of the old woman, though compassion may also be conveyed.

130. **plashy.** *Full of pools*; properly applies to the *ground* surrounding the spring. Cf. Wordsworth’s *Leech Gatherer*, 2nd stanza:

And with her feet she from the plashy earth
Raises a mist.

133. **wintry faggot.** Bundle of sticks to serve as fire-wood in winter.

134. **nightly shed.** Cf. “nightly bed,” *Traveller*, l. 198, and note thereon.

136. **pensive plain.** The plain which causes pensiveness; cf. *Citizen of the World*, li.: “I was yesterday seated at breakfast over a pensive cup of tea.”

142. **passing rich.** Exceedingly rich. This use of “passing” with adjectives is very common in earlier poetry. “’Twas strange, ’twas passing strange,” *Othello*, i., 3. Some commentators think that the preacher was “passing rich” in the eyes of his neighbours, the poet intending to emphasize the poverty and simplicity of the parish. But it is more probable that the preacher is passing rich in his own estimation, so contented and frugal is he.

forty pounds. This was the income of his brother Henry according to the dedication of *The Traveller*. The Vicar of Wakefield’s first living brought him £35 a year, but his second only £15, which he increased “by managing a little farm” (chap. iii.).

145-6. Unlike the Vicar of Bray in the familiar song.

148. **More skill’d.** “More bent” in the first three editions.

149, foll. Cf. *Traveller*, 11-22.

151. “The same persons,” says Prior, in his *Life of Goldsmith*, commenting on this passage, “are seen for a series of years to traverse the same tract of country at certain intervals, intrude into every house which is not defended by the usual outworks of wealth, a gate and a porter’s lodge, exact their portion of the food of the family, and even find an occasional resting-place for the night, or from severe weather, in the chimney-corner of respectable farmers.” (Quoted by Dobson.)

155. **broken soldier.** “The disbanded soldier let loose upon the country at the conclusion of the ‘Seven Years’ War’ was a familiar

figure at this period." (Dobson.) Cf. Campbell's *Soldier's Dream*: "And fain was their war-broken soldier to stay"; "fracti bello," *Aen.*, ii., 13.

159. **glow.** With interest and compassion.

162. His sympathy prompted him to give, before the thought entered his mind that the dictates of charity imposed giving as a duty. Cf. *Citizen of the World*, xxiii.: "The wants and merits of the petitioners are canvassed by the people; neither passion nor pity find a place in their cool discussion; and charity is then only exerted when it has received the approbation of reason."

171. **parting.** Cf. l. 4, and note thereon.

179. **with double sway.** Truth has a force of its own, and the character and manner of the preacher gave it additional force.

182. **steady.** "Ready" in the first ed.; changed, perhaps, on account of the "ready" in l. 185.

187-192. The main logical emphasis in this line is not on "serious thoughts" but on "had rest"; the opposition expressed by "but" is between the existence of grief indicated in l. 186, and the fact that he found a solution and consolation for these griefs in his belief in a future world. So in the simile which follows, the clouds and storms represent these griefs, but the preacher rises above them, and enjoys a perpetual serenity which comes from heaven.

193-194. The fence would probably in this case be a low bank of earth with a furze hedge growing on it.

furze. A prickly shrub with brilliant golden flowers.

196. Some traits of this portrait are said to be taken from the poet's schoolmaster at Lissoy, who had been a quarter-master in Queen Anne's wars, and had thus seen a good deal of the world, and was full of stories of his adventures.

205-206. The rhyme is defective, but Prior suggests that Goldsmith may have pronounced "fault" without the l. In *Retaliation*, ll. 73-74, and in *Edwin and Angelina*, we find a like rhyme, also in Pope's *Essay on Criticism*, l. 422-423.

209. **terms and tides.** Auburn is evidently an inland village, and hence *tides* is not to be taken in its most usual sense, but as Shakespeare uses it in *King John*, iii., 1: "among the high tides of the calendar," i.e.,

the festal seasons or holidays. In old English the word meant "time", hence noontide, Christmas-tide, etc. "Terms" and "tides," therefore, do not differ greatly in meaning; "term" is the word used in connection with law-courts and universities: Michaelmas term, Hilary term; "tide" is used of the church festivals.

221. Cf. Milton's *L'Allegro*, 100: "Then to the spicy nut brown ale."

224. Of course there is a touch of humour here; age is a desirable quality in ale, though not in news.

227. **nicely-sanded.** Sand was thrown on the floor, as rushes were in Shakespeare's time (*Tam. of the Shrew*, iv., 1, 48; *Rich. II.*, i, 3, 289), and sawdust in bar-rooms and butcher-shops in our own day.

232. **The Twelve Good Rules.** Certain rules of conduct ascribed to Charles I., such as: "Pick no quarrels," "Reveal no secrets." They were printed on a broadside with a rude wood-cut of the king's execution, and were a common wall decoration in Goldsmith's time.

the Royal Game of Goose. Played by two persons with dice on a board divided into compartments on some of which a goose was painted. "Royal" is a complimentary epithet often prefixed to the name of games without any apparent reason.

234. **fennel.** An aromatic shrub.

236. **chimney.** The fire-place; Cf. Milton's *L'Allegro*: "And stretched out all the chimney's length."

239. **Obscure it sinks**=It sinks into obscurity.

240. Under the stimulus of the ale and the company the peasant's good opinion of himself is quickened. Prof. Hales compares *Tam O'Shanter*:

Kings may be blest but Tam was glorious
O'er a' the ills of life victorious.

243. **the barber's tale.** The barber has always been proverbial for his garrulity, a natural consequence of the conditions of his trade. Cf. *The Arabian Nights*, Partridge in *Tom Jones*, and chap. iii. of George Eliot's *Romola*.

244. **prevail.** Be current, frequently heard.

245. **shall clear,** of its frown, or heavy expression.

248. **mantling bliss.** The foaming ale. Cf. *Merch. of Venice*, i., 1: "Do cream and mantle like a standing pond"; Pope: "And the brain danced to the mantling bowl,"

249. **Half willing to be prest**, *i.e.*, to taste the cup.

250. This custom of the lady's touching the cup with her lips before it was drunk is often alluded to in literature; cf. Scott's *Young Lochinvar*: "The bride kissed the goblet, the knight took it up"; Ben Johnson's song: "O leave a kiss but in the cup."

254. **gloss of art**. A superficial attractiveness which is superimposed by fashion, as opposed to the innate, inseparable charm which belongs to simple joys.

255. **where nature has its play**. Which give scope to our natural impulses.

256. **firstborn**. Because these are the joys that attract us first, *e.g.*, that attract in childhood.

257. **vacant**. *Free from care*; Goldsmith uses the word without the derogatory implication which it usually carries. Cf. l. 122.

258. The editors compare *Par. Lost*, iii., 231: "Unrespited, unpitied, unreprieved"; v., 899: "Unshaken, unseduced, unterrified"; *Hamlet*, i., 5: "Unhousel'd, disappointed, unanel'd"; *Childe Harold*, iv., 1611: "Unknell'd, uncoffin'd, and unknown."

259. **long pomp**. "Pomp" originally meant procession, and seems to be used in this sense here, although processions were not an ordinary amusement of the English in the eighteenth century. "Long pomp" may mean a tedious and ostentatious entertainment, but the other interpretation is favoured by l. 317.

260. **wanton**. Capricious.

267-268. Cf. *Citizen of the World*, xxv.: "Too much commerce may injure a nation as well as too little; and there is a wide difference between a conquering and a flourishing empire."

269-270. The poet refers to the rapid development of trade, which is hailed as a sign of the prosperity of the country. But such exultation is, in his view, folly for the reasons indicated in 273, foll.

271. A result of the development of commerce and of foreign conquests, was the accumulation of vast private fortunes.

272. Indian nabobs, for example. See on *Traveller*, 387-388.

273-274. The poet's opinion is that the wealth of a country is to be measured by the amount of its own useful products; therefore the gold and merchandise brought into the country from abroad do not really increase the nation's wealth.

275-282. Cf. ll. 63-64; *Traveller*, 392 foll., with notes.

279. **silken sloth.** Note the transferred epithet.

281. **solitary.** Not absolutely so, but *exclusive* sports in which but few join, as opposed to the amusements of the village described in ll. 15, foll.

283-284. The poet thinks that, to pay for imported luxuries, products are exported from the country needful for home consumption.

285. The comma is sometimes placed after "all," but the punctuation in the text is that of the best editions. "All" is to be taken adverbially with "In barren splendour," as we say "all in rags."

287. "This use of *female* for 'woman' is now properly considered a vulgarity." (Rolfe.)

288. **Secure to please.** Sure of pleasing. *Sure* and *secure* are originally identical.

290. "Is not indebted to artificial means for the triumph which her eyes (*i.e.*, her beautiful features generally) secure her." (Barrett.)

293. **solicitous to bless.** Eager to bestow her favours.

298. **vistas.** A vista is a distant view seen between intervening objects, such as trees. The vistas referred to here must be those made by artificial means, planting avenues, etc.

300. Cf. *Traveller*, l. 397, foll.

304. **of contiguous pride.** Of their wealthy and ostentatious neighbours.

305-308. "An immense proportion of England at this time was still waste, or was held in common and very slightly cultivated. By the law of England the soil of common land belonged usually to the lord of the manor, but the surrounding freeholders had certain defined rights upon it. They were of different kinds—rights of pasture, . . . rights of cutting wood and turf, and also rights of cultivation." (Lecky's *History of Eng. in 18th Century*, chap. xxiii., where fuller information on the subject may be found.) Green says (*Short Hist. of Eng. People*, chap. x.): "Between the first and the last years of the eighteenth century a fourth part of England was reclaimed from waste and brought under tillage. At the Revolution of 1688 more than half the kingdom was believed to consist of moorland and forest and fen; and vast commons and wastes covered the greater part of England north of the Humber. But the numerous enclosure bills which began with the reign of George

the Second, and especially marked that of his successor, changed the whole face of the country."

the sons of wealth divide. This was true in a sense, but the assent of three-fourths of the commoners had to be obtained, and "The rights of all cottagers were scrupulously protected, and . . . full compensation was to be granted." (See Lecky, chap. xxiii.) Mr. Lecky maintains that the fencing in of the commons was inevitable and highly beneficial to the community, though sometimes involving hardships for individuals.

315. brocade. Embroidered silk.

316. artist. Artisan. So in *Citizen of the World*, lxv., Goldsmith applies artist to a cobbler. Cf. Pope's *Iliad*, xviii., 479: "Then from his anvil the lame artist rose."

317. long-drawn pomp. Cf. Gray's *Ellegy*: "the long-drawn aisle."

318. The number of capital crimes was very great (cf. note on *Traveller*, l. 385), and included such minor offences as the cutting down of trees in an orchard, the stealing of linen from a bleaching ground. At the Old Bailey in London, 1,121 persons were sentenced to death between 1749 and 1772, of whom 678 were executed. (See Lecky, chap. xxiii.) The executions were public. "Gallows were erected in every important quarter of the city, and on many of them corpses were left rotting in chains." (Lecky, chap. iii.)

319. dome. See *Traveller*, l. 159 and note. The poet may have had in mind more especially the great buildings for public entertainments like the *Ranelagh*, with its rotunda 150 feet in diameter.

322. In those days of dark streets, it was usual to go about at night accompanied by link-boys bearing torches.

335. idly first. In a careless, thoughtless mood at first.

ambitious of the town. Longing for city life.

336. wheel. Spinning-wheel. Spinning, weaving and other trades were largely carried on in farm houses before the great development of machinery and the factory system.

338. fair tribes. The poet is thinking of the women only.

participate her pain. For the use of participate as an active verb cf. *Twelfth Night*, vi., 245, and *Par. Lost*, viii:

Of fellowship I speak
Such as I seek, fit to participate
All rational delight.

344. **Altama.** The Altamaha river in Georgia.

to. *In response to* ; the sounds made by the river are mournful.

352. **dark.** The reference may be to its habit of lying hid.

gathers death around. The scorpion gets its venom from the herbs in the "poisonous fields,"—an old popular idea.

355. It has been suggested that *tiger* refers to the jaguar, but in *Cit. of World*, xvii., Goldsmith speaks as if tigers were found in Canada. The whole description in the passage before us is very fanciful.

357-358. Rolfe compares *Aen.* i., 134 :

Iam caelum terramque meo sine numine, Venti,
Miscere, et tantas audetis tollere moles.

359. **former scene.** The scenes with which they were familiar at Auburn.

362. **thefts of harmless love.**

The kiss snatch'd hasty from the side-long maid,
On purpose guardless, or pretending sleep.

(Thomson's *Winter*, 625-6.)

366. **bowers.** See l. 5, and note.

384. **silent.** The first three editions read "decent."

386. **things like these.** The reference is not to what he has been saying, but to the innocence, and simple joys of which the whole poem treats.

In the *Citizen of the World*, xi., Goldsmith takes the opposite view of luxury.

389-394. Cf. *Traveller*, 143-144.

399. **anchoring.** Riding at anchor.

402. "He seems to distinguish between *shore* and *strand*, making *strand* mean the beach, the shore in the most limited sense of the word." (Hales.)

412. The antithesis shows that "solitary pride" means his pride when he is alone ; when in the crowd, since the world in general despises poetry, he is ashamed of his muse.

414-415. Goldsmith is reported as saying : "I cannot afford to court the drabble-tail muses, my lord ; they would let me starve ; but by my

other labours [his hack work, *Animated Nature*, etc.] I can make a shift to eat, and drink, and have good clothes." This is not, however, strictly true, his poetic power did much for him even in purely material matters.

418. There is a river Tornea, or Torneo, flowing into the Gulf of Bothnia, and a lake of the same name in Sweden. "Pambamarca" is a mountain near Quito.

419. equinoctial fervours. The heat near the equator where day and night are equal.

422. Redress. Cf. *Traveller*, l. 176, and note.

427-430. These four lines were written, according to Boswell, by Dr. Johnson.

429. self-dependent. Not depending on the products of other countries.

WORDSWORTH.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH was of Yorkshire lineage ; he himself tells us that the Wordsworths "had been settled at Peniston in Yorkshire, near the sources of the Don, probably before the Norman Conquest." For many generations at least his paternal ancestors had dwelt there as yeomen, or small landed proprietors. On his mother's side he was descended from an old Westmoreland family. His northern origin showed itself very clearly both in his physical and mental frame. On these were strongly stamped many of the well-defined peculiarities associated with that sturdy and sterling race, doubtless largely Norse in origin, which inhabits the northern counties of England and the Lowlands of Scotland. As the life of his ancestors, so was his own individual life closely bound up with the northern shires to which he belonged, and more especially with that part of them known as the Lake District. This covers an area of some 30 by 25 miles, and includes within its limits sixteen lakes, tarns and streams innumerable, sea coast, river estuaries, and mountains rising to the height of 3000 feet. Here graceful beauty and wild, rugged grandeur are closely intermingled. "Indeed, nowhere else in the world, perhaps, is so much varied beauty to be found in so narrow a space." In Wordsworth's time it was scarcely less exceptional in the character of its inhabitants. "Drawn in great part from the strong Scandinavian stock, they dwell in a land solemn and beautiful as Norway itself, but without Norway's rigour and penury, and with lakes and happy rivers instead of Norway's inarming melancholy sea. They are a mountain folk ; but their mountains are no precipices of insuperable snow, such as keep the dwellers of some Swiss hamlet shut in ignorance and stagnating into idiocy. These barriers divide only to concentrate, and environ only to endear ; their guardianship is but enough to give an added unity to each group of kindred homes. And thus it is that the Cumbrian dalesmen have afforded perhaps as near a realization as human fates have yet allowed of the rural society which statesmen desire for their country's greatness. They have given an example of substantial comfort strenuously won ; of home affections intensified by independent strength ; of isolation without ignorance, and of a shrewd simplicity ; of an hereditary virtue which needs no support from fanaticism, and to which honour is more than law." (Myers' *Wordsworth*.)

On the northern borders of this district, at Cockermouth, Cumberland, William Wordsworth was born April 7th, 1770. His grandfather had been the first of the race to leave Yorkshire and buy for himself a

small estate in Westmoreland. The poet's father was an attorney and law-agent to Sir James Lowther, afterwards Earl of Lonsdale. In 1778 the poet's mother died, and William, along with an elder brother, was sent to the ancient Grammar School of Hawkeshead, a secluded and primitive village in the midst of the Lake District. The conditions at this simple and old-fashioned school were very different from those surrounding boys either at any of the great public schools or at private boarding-schools. Freedom and simplicity particularly characterized Wordsworth's school days. There was neither pressure of work within the class-room nor that of tradition and public opinion outside of it, such as belong to the English public schools; on the other hand, the close supervision and confinement which usually belong to a private school, were absent. The boys lodged with the cottagers of the village, and grew inured to the simplicity of their lives. After school hours each boy must have been, in the main, free to follow his own devices. No conditions could have been more suitable to Wordsworth's temperament, or more favourable to the development of his strong individuality. Finally, and most important of all, Hawkeshead lay in the midst of a beautiful and varied country, with whose different aspects their favourite amusements must have made the boys very familiar. Their sports were not of the elaborate, competitive character of later times, but took the form of rambles on the mountains, boating and skating on the lakes, nutting and fishing. In these Wordsworth, a vigorous and healthy boy, greatly delighted. There was probably nothing about him, at this period, which would mark him out, either to himself or to others, as different from, or superior to, his school-fellows. One peculiarity he did, however, possess to a very extraordinary degree—sensitiveness to the aspects of nature. Not that he went mooning about, after a precocious fashion, in search of the picturesque. The ordinary round of daily life kept him in contact with nature in some of her most beautiful and impressive forms, and produced upon him, in this regard, receptive mind effects of a most potent and permanent kind. It kept him in close contact, too, with the common people, with the "statesmen," the shepherds, and peasants of the district; and from these two sources, nature and the life of the people, he drew the material of his later works.

In October, 1787, Wordsworth entered the University of Cambridge through the kindness of his uncles, for his father had been dead some years. His collegiate life contributed but little to his development. His character was at once strong and narrow, only pliant to congenial

influences. He himself said that his peculiar faculty was *genius*—by which he meant creation and production from within—not *talent*, the capacity of assimilation and appropriation from without. Wordsworth's fruitful knowledge came to him direct from observation and meditation. He seems, accordingly, to have gained little from the regular studies and teaching of Cambridge; nor did he find any special stimulus, as many have done, in the social opportunities which it affords. In college society his powers had no opportunity to show themselves; nor did he form any very intimate or influential friendships. Not that he was, during this period, a recluse; he took his share in ordinary college life; but at college, as at school, he would probably not have impressed an onlooker as being in any respect superior to the average student. By degrees, however, he himself became aware of his special powers, and felt the call to the poetic vocation. In 1784 he wrote his first poem, *An Evening Walk*, which was not published until 1793. Among the most important events of his external life may be numbered his pedestrian tours. Wandering, he tells us, was with him an inborn passion; and it was one in which he indulged throughout his life. In 1790, he with a fellow collegian made a three months' tour of France, Switzerland, Northern Italy and the Rhine. These were stirring days on the Continent; the year before, the Bastille had fallen, and Wordsworth shared, as did most intelligent young Englishmen of his time, in the joy which welcomed the new birth of liberty. As yet, however, natural scenery exercised over him a more powerful influence than human affairs. The impressions of this journey are recorded in *Descriptive Sketches*, a poem which was not written, however, until two years later.

In the beginning of 1791, he took the B.A. degree. His friends wished him to enter the church, but he was reluctant, although he had no definite views of his own. He lingered in London for three months, noting men and things in the keen, meditative fashion natural to him; he made a tour in Wales; he thought of writing for the newspapers. At length he determined to spend a year in France, in order to master the language, with the idea that he might turn it to account in the capacity of a travelling tutor. This stay in France had a very important influence on the poet's development. To escape English society, he went to Orleans. His chief companions there were some French officers who were, most of them, partisans with the old regime. One, however, General Beaupuis, was a lofty and enlightened sympathizer with the Revolution; and through him Wordsworth soon came to take a profound interest in the great struggle going on about him. He was in Paris

shortly after the September Massacres, and felt so deeply the importance of the crisis that he was on the point of throwing himself personally into the contest on the side of the moderate republicans ; but he was under the necessity, probably through lack of money, of returning to England. Change of place did not cool his sympathies. The bloodshed and outrage which accompanied the Revolution and which alienated many of its admirers, Wordsworth with clearer insight perceived to be not the outcome of the new spirit of freedom, but of the oppressions of ages. But when, in the spirit of the era which was supposed to be forever past, the new republic proceeded to embark on a career of conquest : abroad crushed the liberty of Switzerland, and at home began to develop into a military despotism, Wordsworth lost his hope of the future and faith in humanity. A period of deep depression followed, from which he at length, though slowly, recovered. In fact, he passed through a crisis such as befalls many thoughtful men, such as is recorded in the biographies of Carlyle, and of John Stuart Mill ; and such as in familiar life often takes the religious form popularly styled "conversion." Faith in one's own future or the future of the world is shattered, and new truths have to be apprehended, or old truths more vitally realized, in order that the man may once again set out on his life's course with some chart and with some aim. The peculiarity of Wordsworth's case is that his crisis took place in connection with the greatest event of modern history, not with a merely individual experience ; and, secondly, in the peculiar source where he found healing—not in books or the teachings of others, not in what would be ordinarily called a religious source, but in a revelation and healing that came to him direct from visible nature, and from contemplating the simple lives of the "statesmen" and shepherds of his native mountains. The poet's hopes ceased to centre around any great movement like the French Revolution, and he perceived that, not in great political movements, but in the domestic life of the simple, unsophisticated man, is the true anchor for our faith in humanity and our confidence in the future of the race.

Meanwhile, his life had been unsettled, and his prospects uncertain. Unexpectedly, early in 1795, a solution of his difficulties as to the choice of a profession came in the shape of a legacy from a young friend, Raisley Calvert, who had insight enough to perceive the genius of Wordsworth, and left him £900 to enable him to follow out the promptings of this genius. With the strictest economy and utmost plainness of living, Wordsworth judged that this would suffice to maintain him ; and he determined to devote himself unreservedly to what he felt was his

true vocation—poetry. He combined his scanty means with those of his sister Dorothy; they reckoned from all sources upon a joint income of £70 or £80 a year. Dorothy Wordsworth merits, even in the briefest sketch of her brother's life, at least a passing notice. She shared all his tastes and much of his genius. She was one of the “dumb poets.” She had all her brother's insight into nature, all the feelings which belonged to his poetic endowment; but the instrument of verse she never mastered, or, perhaps, did not seek to master; for she devoted her whole life unselfishly to him. His sister Dorothy and the poet Coleridge were, he tells us, the only persons who exerted a profound influence on his spiritual and poetical development.

It was in 1796 that Wordsworth became acquainted with Coleridge; the two men had many interests and opinions in common, and a close friendship sprang up between them. In order to be near Coleridge the Wordsworths rented a house at Alfoxden, in Somersetshire, in July, 1797. The two men exercised an influence upon each other highly favourable to their intellectual and poetic activity. They planned a volume of poems to which each should contribute. The result was the *Lyrical Ballads*, one of the most notable publications in the history of later English poetry. Coleridge furnished four poems,—*The Ancient Mariner*, and three smaller pieces. The bulk of Wordsworth's contributions was much greater; and this volume was the first of his writings to manifest the peculiarities of his genius and the greatness of his power. It included the *Lines Composed above Tintern Abbey*, *The Thorn*, *Expostulation and Reply*, *The Tables Turned*, *Lines Written in Early Spring*, etc. It was in 1798 that the *Lyrical Ballads* were issued; in autumn of the same year Wordsworth, his sister, and Coleridge sailed to Germany. The visit had no special influence upon Wordsworth, whose time was mainly employed in writing poems thoroughly English in character. In the following spring they returned home. In December, 1799, the brother and sister settled down in Dove Cottage, Grasmere, and Wordsworth entered upon a course of life which varied but little during the many years that remained to him. Poetic composition and the contemplation of nature formed the staple of his regular occupations. Of the character of his daily life, the best idea is to be obtained from his sister's diaries, from which large excerpts are given in Knight's *Life of the poet*. The following extract may serve as a sample; it is dated Saturday, May 1st, 1802:

“A clear sky. . . . I sowed the flowers, William helped me. We went and sate in the orchard. . . . It was very hot. William wrote

The Celandine. We planned a shed, for the sun was too much for us. After dinner we went again to our old resting-place in the hollies under the rock. We first lay under the holly, where we saw nothing but the trees, and a budding elm mossed, with the sky above our heads. But that holly-tree had a beauty about it more than its own. . . . When the sun had got low enough we went to the rock shade. Oh, the overwhelming beauty of the vale below, greener than green. Two ravens flew high, high in the sky, and the sun shone upon their bellies and their wings, long after there was none of his light to be seen but a little space on the top of Loughrigg Fell. Heard the cuckoo to-day, this first of May. We went down to tea at eight o'clock . . . and returned after tea. The landscape was fading: sheep and lambs quiet among the rocks. We walked towards King's, and backwards and forwards. The sky was perfectly cloudless. . . . Three solitary stars in the middle of the blue vault, one or two on the points of the high hills."

In 1802 he married Mary Hutchinson, whom he had known since childhood; but this event scarcely interrupted the even tenor of his way. He had a few intimate friends, such as Coleridge and Sir George Beaumont, and in time his writings drew younger men to visit him, DeQuincey, Wilson ("Christopher North"), and even to take up their residence in his neighbourhood. But, on the whole, his life during his prime was the life of a recluse. Nor, with his humbler neighbours, though interested in their welfare, was he on terms of genial intercourse such as marked the relations of Scott to those about him. He was, in short, self-centred, wrapped up in his own thoughts—a reserved man, with a cold and absent-minded exterior. "He wasn't a man as said a deal to common folk," said one of these common folk to an enquirer, "but he talked a deal to hissen." "He was not a man that folks could crack wi'," said another, "nor not a man as could crack wi' folks." In old age, when he became famous, he saw something of literary society in London, and the impression which he made on a very keen, but in this case not very favourable, observer, may be quoted:—"During the last seven or ten years of his life, Wordsworth felt himself to be a recognized lion in certain considerable London circles, and was in the habit of coming up to town with his wife for a month or two every season to enjoy his quiet triumph and collect his bits of tribute *tales quales*. . . . Wordsworth took his bit of lionism very quietly, with a smile sardonic rather than triumphant, and certainly got no harm by it, if he got or expected little good. For the rest, he talked well in his way; with veracity, easy brevity, and force, as a wise tradesman would of his tools and workshop, and as no unwise one could. His voice was good, frank and sonorous, though practically clear, distinct, and forcible rather than melodious; the tone of him business-like, sedately con-

fidest ; no discourtesy, yet no anxiety about being courteous. A fine, wholesome rusticity, fresh as his mountain breezes, sat well on the stalwart veteran, and on all he said and did. You would have said he was usually a taciturn man ; glad to unlock himself to audience sympathetic and intelligent, when such offered itself. His face bore marks of much, not always peaceful, meditation ; the look of it not bland or benevolent so much as close, impregnable and hard, a man *multa tacere loquive paratus*, in a world where he had experienced no lack of contradictions as he strode along. The eyes were not very brilliant, but they had a quiet clearness ; there was enough of brow, and well-shaped ; rather too much of cheek ("horse-face," I have heard satirists say) ; face of squarish shape, and decidedly longish, as I think the head itself was (its "length" going horizontal) ; he was large-boned, lean, but still firm-knit, tall, and strong-looking when he stood, a right good old steel-grey figure, with rustic simplicity and dignity about him, and a vivacious strength looking through him which might have suited one of those old steel-grey markgrafs whom Henry the Fowler set up to ward the 'marches' and do battle with the intrusive heathen in a stalwart and judicious manner." (Carlyle's *Reminiscences*.)

Wordsworth was a philosopher in the antique sense of the word, shaping his life according to his own ideals, and little regarding the fact that these ideals were very different from those of men in general. He found his happiness in easily attainable sources—in nature, in his own work and thoughts, in literature and domestic life. He cared nothing for wealth or the luxuries which it affords. "Plain living and high thinking" characterized his life ; his daily fare and home surroundings were but little superior to those of the peasantry about him. The only luxury in which he indulged was travelling ; he made tours in Scotland, Ireland, and the Continent, of which his works contain memorials, and these, with frequent visits to friends in England, were among the chief events of his quiet life. The simplicity of the tastes of the household and Mrs. Wordsworth's careful management enabled the poet to subsist with comfort upon an income which would have meant harassing poverty to most men of his class. His works brought him no money ; but the payment in 1802 of a debt due his father's estate added something to his resources, and when these proved inadequate through the increasing expenses of his family, he fortunately obtained (1813) through the influence of the Earl of Lonsdale the office of Distributor of Stamps for Westmoreland. This afforded him a sufficient income and did not make claims upon time and energy inconsistent with his devotion to poetic

work. In the same year, 1813, he removed from Grasmere, where he had resided for some fourteen years (nine of them in Dove Cottage) to Rydal Mount, at no great distance; this was his home during the remaining thirty-seven years of his life.

We have noted the appearance of the first great product of Wordsworth's poetical genius, the *Lyrical Ballads*, in 1798. This volume fell almost dead from the press. Wordsworth struck out in new poetic fields, and marked originality in poetry, clashing as it does with preconceived ideas, is rarely welcomed. In 1800 he published a new and enlarged edition of the *Ballads* and prefixed a prose statement of his own poetic theory so fundamentally different from accepted notions as to excite the intense hostility of all the regular critics. The consequence was that each new work of his was received with a chorus of disapprobation or contempt. The general public were thus prejudiced; and the poems themselves possessed no striking and attractive qualities such as might have counteracted, among ordinary readers, the influence of accepted judges. The neglect of his work was keenly felt by the poet, who, however, continued steadily on in his own fashion, or even exaggerated the peculiarities which were offensive to the prevalent taste. Meanwhile these works were read and greatly admired by a discerning few, and began quietly to gain a hold upon a wider public, until in the poet's old age this unnoted development suddenly manifested itself in a widespread recognition of his genius. "Between the years 1830 and 1840 Wordsworth passed from the apostle of a clique into the most illustrious man of letters in England. The rapidity of this change was not due to any remarkable accident, nor to the appearance of any new work of genius. It was merely an extreme instance of what must always occur when an author, running counter to the fashion of his age, has to create his own public in defiance of the established critical prowess. The disciples whom he draws round him are for the most part young; the established authorities are for the most part old; so that by the time the original poet is about sixty years old most of his admirers will be about forty, and most of his critics will be dead. His admirers now become his accredited critics; his works are widely introduced to the public, and if they are really good his reputation is secure. In Wordsworth's case the detractors had been unusually persistent, and the reaction, when it came, was therefore unusually violent." (Myers' *Wordsworth*.)

The change in feeling was manifested in many ways. In 1839 Wordsworth received the honorary degree of D.C.L. from Oxford, and

on the occasion of its bestowal was welcomed with great enthusiasm. In 1842 a pension was offered to him ; in 1843 he was made Poet Laureate. Thus full of years and honours, and in that same tranquillity which marked his life, Wordsworth passed away April 23rd, 1850.

“Every great poet,” said Wordsworth, “is a teacher ; I wish to be considered as a teacher or as nothing.” Wordsworth has, therefore, a didactic aim in his poetry. Happily, however, his conception of teaching was no narrow one ; he did not think that poetry in order to be didactic, must directly present some abstract truth, or be capable of furnishing some moral application ; if a poem kindled the imagination, or stirred the nobler feelings, it contributed in his opinion even more to the education of the reader. His sense of the unity and harmony of things was strong. As in *Tintern Abbey*, we find him giving expression to his sense of the unity of all existence—the setting suns, the round ocean, and the mind of man being all manifestations of one and the same divine spirit—so he believed in the unity and close interconnection of all the faculties of man. No one faculty could be stimulated or neglected without a corresponding effect upon the rest. The delight, for example, afforded by the contemplation of scenery quickened, he thought, the moral nature ; while the man whose imagination or sense of beauty had remained undeveloped must suffer also from limitations and weakness in his ethical constitution. Therefore his work is not generally didactic in the ordinary sense, though not infrequently so ; his poetry may merely stimulate imagination and feeling, and thence educative effects will steal unnoted into heart and brain.

He was a teacher, then ; but his teaching did not mainly aim at imparting any particular system of abstract truth, though this also it may sometimes attempt. It rather sought to elevate and ennoble the whole character by exhibiting, and making the reader feel, the sources of high and genuine pleasure. It teaches by revealing, by stimulating, by elevating. Wordsworth thought that the fountain of the purest and highest joys lie about us, within the reach of all. The child finds them everywhere :

Spontaneous joys, where nature has its play,
The soul adopts, and owns their first-born sway.

But as we grow older the world imposes on us with its lower allurements—wealth, luxury, ambition—which dull our perceptions and degrade our will until we become blind and indifferent to the fountains of the highest happiness and the truest culture. To these, it is Wordsworth’s aim in his poetry to lead us back.

The sources of this happiness and this higher culture the poet had in his own personal experiences, when his heart was sick and his beliefs shattered, found in nature, in the homely round of ordinary duties, in the domestic affections, in the contemplation of the life of men in its simplest and most natural form among the peasantry of his native mountains. These things, accordingly, are what he depicts to us in his poems ; they afford his poetic material ; and with all these things his life fitted him to deal. They are not, however, presented simply and for their own sakes, as the more purely artistic method of Shakespeare or Scott would present them. Wordsworth was of strongly meditative and reflective bent ; what he saw and felt, he naturally made the basis of thought. He was not carried away by his joys and sorrows, as Burns and Shelley. His temperament was cool and self-contained, not emotional and impetuous. Nor was he markedly sympathetic, forgetting himself in the life of others. So his poetry neither gives expression simply to feeling, nor does it afford purely objective pictures of men and women ; it uses these things as material or stimulus to thought. Wordsworth does not forthwith set down what he has felt or seen ; he broods over it and shapes it to moral rather than artistic ends. He is not passionate or animated ; his poems appeal, not to the active and impetuous man, but to the contemplative and thoughtful—to age rather than to youth. It will be noted in the selections from Scott contained in this volume, how completely the poet effaces himself, just as Shakespeare effaces himself in his plays. He neither intrudes his personality nor his reflections. But Wordsworth is always in his own poems ; sometimes illegitimately speaking through the mouths of his characters, more often turning aside to reflect or comment.

With the earnestness of Wordsworth's temperament and the seriousness of his aim, playfulness of fancy and delight in mere ornament were scarcely compatible. Unlike Keats, he had not the purely artistic and sensuous nature which could solace itself with such things. Substance with him was all-important, and this substance must be truth. His poetry was based on the facts of life, and showed

How verse may build a throne
On humble truth.

One merit he especially claimed for himself, that he kept "his eye on the subject." Nothing in the poets who preceded him irritated him more than their inaccuracies,—for example, in the delineation of natural scenes, their conscious sacrifice of truth for the sake of what they considered

poetic effect, as exemplified, for instance, in their pastoral poetry. The same spirit which demanded truth in matter called for simplicity and directness in style. He aimed at keeping the reader's eye also on the subject, and did not blur the clearness of the outline of his theme for the sake of the charm of ornament and of technical display. Hence, his style, at its best, is marvellously direct, chaste, and effective ; and, at its worst, tends to prosaic baldness and triviality. So simple, so free from every needless excrescence, so perfectly adapted to the thought, is Wordsworth's expression in his happier moments, that Matthew Arnold has affirmed that he has no style, *i.e.*, the words are so perfectly appropriate that they seem to come from the object, not from the writer. "Nature herself seems," says Matthew Arnold, "to take the pen out of his hand, and to write for him with her own bare, sheer, penetrating power. This arises from two causes : from the profound sincerity with which Wordsworth feels his subject, and also from the profoundly sincere and natural character of the subject itself. He can and will treat such a subject with nothing but the most plain, first-hand, almost austere naturalness."

The greatness of Wordsworth and the significance of his poetry can only be adequately conceived when his position in the development of English literature has been examined. The typical and accredited poetical style of the preceding age is represented by Pope. That poetry sought to instruct, or to please the intellect, rather than to stimulate the imagination or to touch the emotions. It put greater stress upon style and form than upon matter ; and, in style, it aimed at elegance, polish, and epigrammatic force. It took much thought for dignity and propriety ; and its ideas of dignity and propriety were narrow. Thus it limited the range of its themes, and feared especially the "low" and commonplace. This tendency affected not only its matter but its language. It avoided, as far as possible, the language of real life, and to escape ordinary words had recourse to vapid periphrases. One result of the narrowness of the range of vocabulary and imagery was that both became utterly hackneyed.

Against all these peculiarities the genius of Wordsworth naturally revolted. He found his model, in as far as he had one, in Burns, a poet outside recognized literary circles—a man of the people. But the fact that existing taste was formed upon such poetry as has just been characterized, and that standards based upon it were being constantly applied to his own poetry, intensified his dislike of the elder fashion, and led him to intensify the novel peculiarities of his own poems.

He was a conscious rebel against authority, and naturally gave the less weight to considerations which might be urged in favour of the old, and against the new. Hence, in his theory, and not seldom also in practice, he carried these peculiarities to extremes.

In conclusion, two or three great services of Wordsworth as a poet may be enumerated. He opened the eyes of his own generation and still continues, in a less degree, to open the eyes of readers of the present day to the beauties of nature, and to the fund of consolation and joy that may there be found. He showed that we do not need to go to distant lands and remote ages for poetic material, that poetry lies about us, in our own age, in ordinary life, in commonplace men and women. And he overthrew the stilted conventional style of the poetry which was in the ascendant, and showed that the highest poetry might be simple, direct, and plain.

BIBLIOGRAPHY.—Life by Christopher Wordsworth; a fuller one by Prof. Knight; excellent shorter sketch with criticisms by Myers (*Eng. Men of Letters*); Wordsworth's autobiographical poem, *The Prelude*, is of the highest value for biographical purposes. Works—full critical ed. by Knight, 8 vols.; ed. by Dowden, 7 vols.; in one vol., with introd. by Morley (Macmillan's *Globe Library*). Critical essays are very numerous; Wordsworth's prose preface to the *Lyrical Ballads* should be read in connection with Coleridge's *Biographia Literaria*, chaps. v., xiv., xvii.-xxii.; among best essays by other writers are those by M. Arnold (Introd. to *Select. from Wordsworth*), Lowell (*Among My Books*), R. H. Hutton (*Essays on Literary Criticism*), Leslie Stephen (*Hours in a Library*, iii.), Principal Shairp, Masson, etc.; *Wordsworthiana* is a vol. containing papers by members of the *Wordsworth Soc.*; the one vol. ed. of works mentioned above has a bibliography. There is an excellent vol. of *Selections* by M. Arnold, and another by Knight.

UPON WESTMINSTER BRIDGE.

The date following the title was inserted by the poet himself, who added: "Written on the roof of a coach on my way to France." But Knight shows that this date is inaccurate. "He left London for Dover on his way to Calais on the 30th of July, 1802. The sonnet was written that morning as he travelled towards Dover. The following is the record of the journey in his sister's diary: 'July 30—Left London

between five and six o'clock of the morning outside the Dover coach. A beautiful morning. The city, St. Paul's, with the river—a multitude of boats, made a beautiful sight as we crossed *Westminster Bridge*; the houses not overhung by their clouds of smoke, and were spread out endlessly; yet the sun shone brightly with such a pure light that there was something like the purity of one of Nature's own grand spectacles.'"

Rolfe quotes, in connection with this sonnet, from Caroline Fox's *Memories of Old Friends*: "Mamma spoke of the beauty of Rydal, and asked whether it did not rather spoil him [Wordsworth] for common scenery. 'O, no,' he said, 'it rather opens my eyes to see the beauty there is in all; God is everywhere, and thus nothing is common or devoid of beauty. No, ma'am, it is the *feeling* that instructs the seeing. Wherever there is a heart to feel, there is also an eye to see; even in a city you have light and shade, reflections, probably views of the water and trees, and a blue sky above you, and can you want for beauty with all these? People often pity me while residing in a city, but they need not, for I can enjoy its characteristic beauties as well as any."

THE GREEN LINNET.

Composed in 1803, in the orchard, Town-end, Grasmere; published in 1807.

A green linnet is not in itself a fit subject for a poem, but only as connected with, or symbolizing some emotion in the poet. Here, as often, the title does not indicate the real theme; the true subject of this poem, the stimulus which leads the poet to write it, is the joy which he feels at the renewal of nature in spring. The poem is a simple illustration of the distinguishing excellence of Wordsworth's work. "Wordsworth's poetry is great because of the extraordinary power with which Wordsworth feels the joy offered to us in nature, the joy offered to us in the simple primary affections and duties; and because of the extraordinary power, with which, in case after case, he shows us this joy, and renders it so as to make us share it. The source of joy from which he thus draws is the truest and most unfailing source of joy accessible to man. It is also accessible universally. Wordsworth brings us word, therefore, according to his own strong and characteristic line, he brings us word 'Of joy in widest commonalty spread.'" (M. Arnold.)

The poem before us is perfectly simple ; there is no moral drawn, no hidden meaning. It merely recalls, expresses, intensifies for us the joy we have all felt on a perfect day of spring when

Once more the Heavenly Power
Makes all things new.

On such a day it is enough to live. We seek no reason for our happiness ; it is pure sympathy with nature. On such a day alone, the ordinary man perhaps vividly feels that which Wordsworth so continually felt, and which lies at the basis of his nature poetry,—that there is between us and nature a sympathy like that between man and man, and thus nature becomes transformed from mere matter to something pulsating with a spirit akin to our own.

In the opening stanza the poet sufficiently indicates the occasion, so that we may catch his feeling. Then among the many tokens of spring which surround him, he seizes on the linnet as most adequately symbolizing for him the joy of spring. Why the linnet is chosen, is sufficiently indicated in the poem, more especially in the 2nd and 3rd stanzas.

The predominant note of perfect contentment with actual and present things is eminently typical of Wordsworth's poetry, and may be contrasted with Shelley's unsatisfied yearning, and Keats' escape to an ideal scene as exhibited in their bird-poems included in this selection.

Note the aptness of the stanza-form to the feeling ; the most noticeable peculiarities are the three successive rhyming lines, and the double rhymes in 4th and 8th lines. Both these peculiarities contribute to the liveness of the movement.

1-8. In 1807 this stanza read :

The May is come again ;—how sweet
To sit upon my orchard seat !
And Birds and Flowers once more to greet,
My last year's Friends together ;
My thoughts they all by turns employ,
A whispering leaf is now my joy,
And then a Bird will be the toy
That doth my fancy tether.

In 1827 and in subsequent editions, the stanza reads as in the text, except that Palgrave has adopted from the edition of 1815 "flowers and birds," instead of "birds and flowers."

18. **paramours.** As the word is ordinarily pronounced, the rhyme is defective. In ll. 28 and 32, 36 and 40 the rhyme is also imperfect,

but, owing to the separation of the lines, these licenses are less objectionable.

33-40. The reading in the text is that of 1832 and subsequent editions. In 1807 the reading was :

While thus before my eyes he gleams,
A Brother of the leaves he seems ;
When in a moment forth he teems
 His little song in gushes ;
As if it pleased him to disdain
And mock the Form which he did feign,
While he was dancing with the train
 Of Leaves among the bushes.

In 1827 :

My sight he dazzles, half deceives,
A bird so like the dancing leaves.

with the remainder as in the text, except that "when" stood for "while" in line 39.

TO THE CUCKOO.

According to Wordsworth himself, this poem was composed in the orchard at Town-end, Grasmere, 1804 ; but entries in his sister Dorothy's journal seem to indicate that it was written in March, 1802. Knight suggests that "it may have been altered and readjusted in 1804."

As in the case of the previous selection, the bird is not the theme of the poem ; here, however, it is the occasion. Certain peculiarities of the cuckoo, sufficiently indicated by the poet, make it suggestive to the childish mind, of the unknown and vague. Most of us can look back on some place or scene, pregnant for our childish minds with vague possibilities of beauty and adventure. In those days there is an interest and freshness about life which gradually vanishes as we grow older. This sense of poetry and romance was abnormally strong in the child Wordsworth. He refers to it repeatedly in his poetry, especially in the *Immortality Ode* and in *Tintern Abbey*, and in the former poem has chosen to suggest a mystical explanation of it.

Of this ideal world in which the mind of the imaginative boy Wordsworth dwells much, the cuckoo became the symbol ; and now, in mature years, as the poet listens to its familiar cry, a two-fold stimulus is given to his feelings : first, through the associations with boyhood

and its happiness ; second, through the associations with the ideal and the life of imagination. In the flood of feeling which pours over the poet's heart the "golden time" of youth seems renewed, and the commonplaceness which maturer years has imparted to his surroundings temporarily vanishes ; once more the world becomes an "unsubstantial faery place," an ideal realm.

Palgrave says : "This poem has an exultation and glory, joined with an exquisiteness of expression, which places it in the highest rank among the many masterpieces of its illustrious author."

5-8. Four variants of this stanza are given in Knight's ed. The reading in the text is that of 1827 and of 1845. In 1832 ll. 7 and 8 read :

That seems to fill the whole air's space
As loud far off as near.

In 1807 :

While I am lying on the grass
I hear thy restless shout :
From hill to hill it seems to pass
About, and all about !

In 1815 the stanza read as in the text, except l. 6 :

Thy loud note smites my ear !

6. **Two-fold.** Consisting of two notes, as represented in the name of the bird.

9-12. The text is that of the ed. of 1827 ; in 1807 we find :

To me, no babbler with a tale
Of sunshine and of flowers,
Thou tellest, Cuckoo ! in the vale
Of visionary hours.

In 1815 :

I hear thee babbling to the vale
Of sunshine and of flowers ;
And unto me thou bring'st a tale, etc.

12. **visionary hours.** Hours which were full of visions,—hours when the imagination was at work.

18-24. The cuckoo is a shy and restless bird, not easily seen.

31. **Faery.** A variant of the more usual word *fairy* ; the form *faery* is connected with Spenser's great poem, and is here specially appropriate as suggesting his meaning of the word pertaining to the region of the ideal and of imagination ; whereas *fairy* is rather suggestive of the more trivial ideas connected with the fanciful beings of childish story.

SHE WAS A PHANTOM OF DELIGHT.

Composed 1804, published 1807. "Written at Town-end, Grasmere. The germ of this poem was four lines, composed as a part of the verses on the Highland Girl. Though beginning in this way it was written from my heart, as is sufficiently obvious." (*Wordsworth's Note.*)

Wordsworth himself says that these verses refer to his wife. (See Knight's *Memoirs*, Vol. II., p. 306.) They are written, then, of a particular individual, but also, as all true poetry, serve to embody a more general truth—the successive stanzas represent three phases of man's view of, and attitude towards, woman.

The vision of woman contained in the first stanza presents her as perhaps she most frequently appears in lyric poetry, and as she is apt to appear to dawning passion. The vision is charming, but, to say the least of it, altogether incomplete, and based less upon actual fact than upon the workings of fancy. Closer knowledge and more intimate companionship while not destroying this poetic charm, reveals the more substantial reality of her character. She, too, belongs to this world, and is human, and for these reasons gains stronger hold upon the heart. In the final stanza she appears as seen after the fullest knowledge given by the association of years. There is less of romance, but a more profound admiration and respect. She is no longer a phantom to haunt and stimulate the fancy; she presents herself in her functions as a wife and mother, and, yet still, as at every stage, she belongs in a measure to the ideal, and draws us towards it,—“Das ewig weibliche zieht uns hinan.”

1-4. “The ‘four lines composed as a part of the verses on the Highland Girl’ were doubtless the first four lines of the first stanza.” (Knight.)

8. In the ed. of 1836 :

From May-time's brightest, liveliest dawn.

22. **Machine.** “The use of the word ‘machine’ . . . has been much criticised. For a similar use of the term see the sequel to *The Waggoner*. The progress of mechanical industry in Britain since the beginning of the present century has given a more limited and purely technical meaning to the word than it bore when Wordsworth used it in these two instances.” (Knight.)

30. **of an angel light.** In ed. of 1845 : “of angelic light.”

THOUGHT OF A BRITON ON THE SUBJUGATION OF
SWITZERLAND.

This sonnet was written in 1807 by the poet while pacing to and fro between the Hall of Coleorton, in Essex, the residence of his friend, Sir George Beaumont, and the principal farm-house on the estate, where he was temporarily living.

In 1802 Napoleon had crushed the liberties of Switzerland ; in 1807 he was preparing to invade England.

The title in brackets is Palgrave's, not Wordsworth's.

THE INNER VISION.

Written 1833, published 1835, without title ; that in the text is Palgrave's invention. W's statement of his method in describing nature given in De Vere's *Essays*, II., p. 277, illustrates this sonnet.

The octave is introductory, and states a feeling which the poet experiences ; this feeling is an illustration of a broad truth which underlies Wordsworth's poetic work. In the sestet the poet proceeds to give expression to this truth, and his sense of its importance,—the external world furnishes merely the basis for poetry ; the most valuable part of a poem is that which is added by the reflective powers or by the feelings of the artist himself, and such reflection or feeling may elevate the humblest external fact which we observe by our senses. Cf. *Peele Castle*, 4th stanza :

Ah ! *then*, if mine had been the painter's hand,
To express what then I saw ; and add the gleam,
The light that never was, on sea or land,
The consecration, and the poet's dream.

5-8. In Wordsworth's MS. occurs a variant of this stanza :

Pleased rather with that soothing after-tone
Whose seat is in the mind, occasion's Queen !
Else Nature's noblest objects were I ween
A yoke endured, a penance undergone.

8. The beauty that will present itself when the eyes are next lifted to view the scene, and the beauty of the scene which they already have enjoyed.

10. commerce. Communion ; cf. Milton's *Il Penseroso* : " And looks commercing with the skies."

SCOTT.

WALTER SCOTT was an almost exact contemporary of Wordsworth, and like him was a great force in the poetic movement which covers the later part of the 18th and the earlier part of the 19th century. These two men, however, unlike in character and manner of life, developed different elements of that movement.

The thought of the 18th century had been marked by a preference for general principles as compared with concrete facts, and by a proneness to neglect all that cannot be clearly and rationally accounted for; the province of the half-known and vaguely surmised was overlooked. This tendency in thought was accompanied by a parallel tendency in form; what was chiefly aimed at in the style both of prose and poetry, was clearness, elegance, and polish. The consequence of the prevalent bent was the predominance of dry intellect, the expression of feeling was checked, and imagination was neglected; while in the matter of style, that vague suggestiveness and sensuous beauty so characteristic of poetry was considered of minor importance as compared with clearness and rhetorical effectiveness. Busy as these generations were in getting their ideas clarified and arranged, breadth, and the study of the literature of other times were neglected. An exception was made in the case of classical, more especially of Latin, literature, which exhibited a kindred spirit and form. On the other hand, the middle ages were regarded with contempt, and the later writers of Elizabethan times treated with an air of patronizing superiority. The love of mysticism in mediæval literature,—of the supernatural and inexplicable, its fondness for mere adventure and picturesque detail, its lack of form, alienated the interest of this less simple age; whilst the rationality, the worldliness, and finished style of the Latin literature of the Augustan period were sources of attraction. Against the narrow rationalism which we have described, there set in an inevitable reaction; thought and art began to broaden in various directions. We have seen, in the case of Wordsworth, how poetry became more comprehensive, and gathered into its sphere the persons and incidents of commonplace, and, what the 18th century would have called, low and vulgar, life. There was a broadening in other directions, for example, an awakening of interest in the past; the first great historians appeared in English literature, Gibbon, Hume, and Robertson. The middle ages, especially, attracted by those very qualities in virtue

of which they had formerly repelled. The quickened delight in the play of imagination and fancy, found endless food in mediæval literature and Gothic art; and, in its exaggerated manifestations, took a childish interest in ghost stories, in the horrible, in all that stimulated the feelings. In poetry, the new tendency turned from the abstract intellectual, or unromantic themes of the 18th century—from the *Essay on Man*, and the *Essay on Criticism*, from *The Rape of the Lock*, and from satire—to what appealed to the eye and imagination, to the picturesque, to records of action and adventure. The new spirit signalized itself in many ways,—in the publication of Percy's *Reliques of Ancient Poetry* (1765), and of the *Poems of Ossian*, in the development of the historic novel, beginning with Horace Walpole's *Castle of Otranto* (1763), in the taste for Gothic architecture, and for natural landscape-gardening as opposed to the formal Dutch style. This tendency, as far as imaginative literature goes, culminated in the work of Scott; and as we study the man and his circumstances, we see how temperament, antecedents, and surroundings all contributed to make him the great exponent of the historic, romantic, and picturesque.

In the first place, Scott himself grew up when this tendency was in the air, and when writers of inferior genius were making experiments in the direction which he was to follow. In the next place, he was a Scotchman; and Scotland had preserved remnants of earlier social conditions longer than any other part of the United Kingdom. This was especially true of the Highlands and the Borders: with the former, circumstances and tastes made Scott early familiar; with the latter, he was connected by the closest ties. Again, the scenery of Scotland was fitted to nourish the romantic sentiment, for even nature has her romantic and her classic aspects. The finished and orderly appearance of a fertile and cultivated country in a bright southern atmosphere is likely to charm the taste that appreciates the definiteness and perfection of classic art. Whereas the wild and rugged aspect of a bleak, mountainous country like Scotland, the dark glens, the desolate moors, half perceived through the veil of mist, have the mystery and suggestiveness of romantic art. Even Edinburgh, with which, next to the Borders, Scott's life was most associated, is not only most romantic in its natural features, but even in its artificial characteristics preserved, in Scott's youth, Gothic and feudal elements beyond any other city in the island. By family history, too, Scott was linked with the historic past. He was descended from a prominent Border family, the Scotts of Harden. Auld Watt, of Harden, of whom Border story had much

to tell, was an ancestor of his. "I am therefore lineally descended," he says, in his autobiographic sketch, "from that ancient chieftain, whose name I have made ring in many a ditty, and from his fair dame, the Flower of Yarrow,—no bad genealogy for a Border minstrel."

Walter Scott was born in Edinburgh, Aug. 15th, 1771. In early life he was somewhat delicate, and contracted a slight but permanent lameness. For the sake of health he was sent to live with his paternal grandfather, who held the farm of Sandy Knowe, in the very midst of scenes memorable in Border story. Here the child awakened into consciousness, and here, before he could read, the first literary impression was made on his mind through learning by heart the old ballad of *Hardicanute*. After passing through the Edinburgh High School, his health again failed, and he was sent to recruit at Kelso, the most beautiful village in Scotland (as he himself tells us) surrounded by "objects not only grand in themselves, but venerable from their association." "The romantic feelings," he continues, "which I have described as predominating in my mind, naturally rested upon and associated themselves with these grand features of the landscape around me; and the historical incidents, or traditional legends connected with many of them, gave to my admiration a sort of intense impression of reverence, which at times made my heart feel too big for its bosom. From this time the love of natural beauty, more especially when combined with ancient ruins, or remains of our fathers' piety or splendour, became with me an insatiable passion." At this date his appetite for reading was great, and his favourite books show his natural taste and served to develop it. Among these were the romantic poems of Spenser and Tasso; but first in his affections was Percy's collection of old ballads, "nor do I believe," he says, "that I ever read a book half so frequently, or with half the enthusiasm."

He now entered classes in the university, and when about fifteen years old became an apprentice to his father, who was a Writer to the Signet, a profession which corresponds nearly to that of solicitor. But it was not on legal pursuits that his interests were centred. He and a friend would spend whole holidays wandering in the most solitary spots about Arthur's Seat and Salisbury Crags, composing romances in which the martial and miraculous always predominated. When opportunity permitted he delighted to make longer pedestrian excursions, for "the pleasure of seeing romantic scenery, or what afforded me at least equal pleasure, the places which had been distinguished by remarkable historic events." Some business led him to

penetrate even the Highlands—a rare thing in those days,—and repeated visits made him familiar not merely with the beautiful scenery, but with the remnants of picturesque and primitive manners and customs. As he grew to maturity, he mingled freely with the world and became intimate with a brilliant circle of young men of his own age. In 1792 he was called to the bar; and—an event, perhaps, of not much less import in his life—in the same year made his first expedition into Liddesdale, one of the most inaccessible parts of the Border country. “During seven successive years Scott made a raid, as he called it, into Liddesdale, with Mr. Shortreed for his guide, exploring every rivulet to its source, and every ruined *peel* from foundation to battlement. At this time no wheeled carriage had ever been seen in the district—the first, indeed, that ever appeared there was a gig, driven by Scott himself for a part of his way, when on the last of these seven excursions. There was no inn nor public-house of any kind in the whole valley; the travellers passed from the shepherd’s hut to the minister’s manse, and again from the cheerful hospitality of the manse to the rough and jolly welcome of the homestead, gathering wherever they went songs and tunes, and occasionally some tangible relics of antiquity. . . . To these rambles Scott owed much of the materials of his ‘Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border,’ and not less of that intimate acquaintance with the living manners of these unsophisticated regions, which constitutes the chief charm of one of the most charming of his prose works.” (Lockhart’s *Life*.) He began to study German; the results are shown in the translation from that language of some romantic ballads, and of Goethe’s *Goetz von Berlichingen*, a dramatic picture of mediæval baronial life on the Rhine. These were his first published ventures in literature.

In 1797 Scott married, and this made the successful prosecution of his profession a matter of greater importance than before; but his heart was not in his barrister work, and his income from it was neither large nor likely to increase greatly. At the close of 1799, he gladly accepted the office of sheriff-depute of Selkirkshire, which was obtained for him by the influence of the head of his clan, the Duke of Buccleuch. This post not only brought a small but assured income of £300 with very light duties, but also, what Scott prized greatly, gave him another connection with the Borders. He now threw himself enthusiastically into the preparation of a collection of border ballads. Two volumes appeared in 1802, and were well received. While engaged upon the third volume, he began an imitation of an old ballad romance—a work which proved so congenial to him that it developed into a long poem,

The Lay of the Last Minstrel. It was published in January, 1805, and had a success which had never been equalled in the history of English poetry. It was a poem at once of a most novel, attractive, and popular character. Its reception decided that literature was to be the main business of its writer's life. At about the same time Scott entered into partnership with the Ballantynes in the printing business, but this partnership was kept a profound secret. During the ten years which followed the publication of the *Lay*, Scott wrote his longer poems; the most important of these were *Marmion* (1808) and *The Lady of the Lake*, 1810. The large returns which his works brought him as author and as publisher, encouraged him to become a landed proprietor. In 1811 he made the first purchase of what by gradual additions came to be the considerable estate of Abbotsford, situated in the midst of his favourite border country. He found the keenest pleasure in realizing here a "romance in brick and mortar," in planting trees, and in all the duties and pleasures of a country gentleman. It was his dream to found a family, and to hand down an entailed estate to remote posterity. In 1813 the Ballantyne firm were greatly embarrassed, but weathered the storm by the assistance of the publisher Constable. Meantime, when the need of money was becoming more pressing, Scott's popularity as a poet was on the decline; his later works were not equal to the three earliest, already mentioned, and Byron was surpassing him in popular estimation in the very species of poetry which he had introduced. Scott, whose estimate of his own power and works was always modest to excess, acknowledged Byron's superiority, and began to look about for some new field for the exercise of his literary skill. He had already in 1805 begun writing a prose romance which he had laid aside in deference to the unfavourable opinions of some friends to whom he had submitted it. This he now resumed; it was completed and published anonymously in 1814 under the title of *Waverley*. Its success was no less extraordinary than that of the *Lay*. Scott as a poet ranked high in a generation of great poets, but in romance he is beyond comparison. "All is great in the *Waverley* novels," said Goethe, "material, effect, characters, execution." "What infinite diligence in the preparatory studies," he exclaimed, "what truth of detail in execution."

The rapidity of Scott's production, especially when we consider the high level of excellence, is astonishing. In less than three years he produced four masterpieces: *Waverley*, *Guy Mannering*, *The Anti-quary*, and *Old Mortality*. From 1814 to 1829 he wrote twenty-three novels besides shorter tales, and a large amount of literary work of a

different character. Scott, like Byron, is one of the few English authors who was speedily and widely popular throughout Europe. Abbotsford became a centre for pilgrims from many lands, apart from being the resort of numerous visitors drawn thither by closer and more personal ties. Scott amidst all his work, literary and legal (for he held a permanent position as clerk of Session), found time to play the hospitable host, to attend to his plantations and the other affairs of his estate, to indulge in country sports, to mingle freely in society when in Edinburgh, where he spent a portion of each year, and to take a prominent part as a citizen in many matters of public interest. No man worked harder or accomplished more, and no man in his leisure hours threw himself with more hearty zest into his amusements.

A visitor to Abbotsford in 1823 thus records his impressions : " I had seen Sir Walter Scott, but never met him in society before this visit. He received me with all his well-known cordiality and simplicity of manner. . . . I have since been present at his first reception of many visitors, and upon such occasions, as indeed upon every other, I never saw a man who, in his intercourse with all persons, was so perfect a master of courtesy. His manners were so plain and natural, and his kindness took such immediate possession of the feelings, that this excellence in him might for a while pass unobserved. . . . His air and aspect, at the moment of a first introduction, were placid, modest, and for his time of life, venerable. Occasionally, when he stood a little on ceremony, he threw into his address a deferential tone, which had in it something of old-fashioned politeness, and became him extremely well. A point of hospitality in which Sir Walter Scott never failed, whatever might be the pretensions of the guests, was to do the honours of conversation. When a stranger arrived, he seemed to consider it as much a duty to offer him the resources of his mind as those of his table ; taking care, however, by his choice of subjects, to give the visitor an opportunity of making his own stores, if he had them, available. . . . It would be extremely difficult to give a just idea of his general conversation to any one who had not known him. Considering his great personal and literary popularity, and the wide circle in which he had lived, it is perhaps remarkable that so few of his sayings, real or imputed, are in circulation. But he did not affect sayings ; the points and sententious turns, which are so easily caught up and transmitted, were not natural to him ; though he occasionally expressed a thought very prettily and neatly. . . . But the great charm of his 'table-talk' was in the sweetness and *abandon* with

which it flowed,—always, however, guided by good sense and good taste ; the warm and unstudied eloquence with which he expressed rather sentiments than opinions ; and the liveliness and force with which he narrated and described ; and all he spoke derived so much of its effect from indefinable felicities of manner, look, and tone—and sometimes from the choice of apparently insignificant words—that a moderately faithful transcript of his sentences would be but a faint image of his conversation. . . . Not only was he inexhaustible in anecdote, but he loved to exert the talent of dramatizing, and in some measure representing in his own person the incidents he told of, or the situations he imagined. . . . No one who has seen him can forget the surprising power of change which his countenance showed when awakened from a state of composure. In 1823, when I first knew him, the hair on his forehead was quite grey, but his face, which was healthy and sanguine, and the hair about it, which had still a strong reddish tinge, contrasted, rather than harmonized with the sleek, silvery locks above ; a contrast which might seem rather suited to a jovial and humorous, than to a pathetic expression. But his features were equally capable of both. The form and hue of his eyes were wonderfully calculated for showing great varieties of emotion. Their mournful aspect was extremely earnest and affecting ; and, when he told some dismal and mysterious story, they had a doubtful, melancholy, exploring look, which appealed irresistibly to the hearer's imagination. Occasionally, when he spoke of something very audacious or eccentric, they would dilate and light up with a tragic-comic, harebrained expression, quite peculiar to himself. Never, perhaps, did a man go through all the gradations of laughter with such complete enjoyment, and a countenance so radiant. The first dawn of a luminous thought would show itself sometimes, as he sat silent, by an involuntary lengthening of the upper lip, followed by a shy side-long glance at his neighbours, indescribably whimsical, and seeming to ask from their looks whether the spark of drollery should be suppressed or allowed to blaze out. In the full tide of mirth, he did indeed 'laugh the heart's laugh,' like Walpole, but it was not boisterous and overpowering, nor did it check the course of his words." To these notes we may add some of Lockhart's in regard to a little expedition which Sir Walter and he made in the same year (1823) to the upper regions of the Tweed and Clyde. "Nothing could induce him to remain in the carriage when we approached any celebrated edifice. If he had never seen it before, his curiosity was like that of an eager stripling ; if he had examined it fifty times, he must renew his familiarity, and gratify the tenderness of

grateful reminiscences. While on the road his conversation never flagged—story suggested story, and ballad came upon ballad in endless succession. But what struck me most was the apparently omnivorous grasp of his memory. That he should recollect every stanza of any ancient ditty of chivalry or romances that had once excited his imagination, could no longer surprise me ; but it seemed as if he remembered everything without exception, so it were in anything like the shape of a verse, that he had ever read.”

Scott's relations with his fellow-men were of the most genial character—indeed, we may say, with his fellow-creatures ; for dumb animals had an instinctive fondness for him, and he lived almost on terms of friendship with his dogs. In the company of children he delighted. He won the attachment of his own servants and of the peasantry of his district. He gave even too much of his time and of his money to help his friends. There was no pettiness, no grudging jealousy in his relations with his literary contemporaries. No man was more sincerely modest about his own ability and works, or more generous in his praise of others. With Wordsworth, with Byron, his successful rival in poetry, he was on the most friendly terms. “He had an open nature,” says Palgrave, “which is the most charming of all charms ; was wholly free from the folly of fastidiousness ; *had* real dignity, and hence never stood upon it ; talked to all he met, and lived as friend with friend among his servants and followers. ‘Sir Walter speaks to every man,’ one of them said, ‘as if they were blood-relations.’” “Few men,” he himself writes, “have enjoyed society more, or been *bored*, as it is called, less, by the company of tiresome people. I have rarely, if ever, found any one out of whom I could not extract amusement and edification. Still, however, from the earliest time I can remember, I preferred the pleasure of being alone to wishing for visitors.” “God bless thee, Walter, my man !” said his old uncle, “thou hast risen to be great, but thou wast always good.”

Scott's character was submitted, without apparent deterioration, to what is considered the most severe of all tests—the test of long and extraordinarily brilliant prosperity. It was now to be tried by adverse fortune, which only served to bring to the surface some of the finer and more heroic qualities that lay in his sound and wholesome nature. In 1826, at a time of widespread commercial disaster, the house of Ballantyne failed, with obligations amounting to £117,000, due partly to Scott's lavish expenditure, but mainly to the lack of business ability in the avowed members of the firm. Instead of taking advantage of bankruptcy, Scott set himself resolutely to work to pay off this immense sum. His lavish

style of living was reduced to the most modest expenditure ; his habits of life were changed that he might devote himself unremittingly to his great task. In two years, between January 1826 and January 1828, he earned nearly £40,000 for his creditors. By the close of 1830 he had lessened the indebtedness of Ballantyne & Co. by £63,000, and had his health been continued a few years longer, he would doubtless have accomplished his undertaking. But before he was fifty, his constitution had already given signs of being seriously impaired, doubtless the result of too continuous application ; in 1819 his life had been for a time in danger, and from this date he was physically an old man. It was inevitable that the prodigious exertions which he put forth after the bankruptcy should tell upon his strength. There were besides worry and nervous tension of various kinds. His wife died ; sadness and sorrow in various forms gathered about him. Symptoms of paralysis became apparent ; his mind, as he himself felt, no longer worked in the old fashion. "I have suffered terribly, that is the truth," he writes in his diary, May 1831, "rather in body than in mind, and I often wish I could lie down and sleep without waking. But I will fight it out if I can." As the disease of the brain made progress he was seized with the happy illusion that he had paid all his debts. After an unsuccessful attempt to improve his health by a voyage to Italy, he returned, to die, Sept. 21st, 1832, in his own Abbotsford, amidst the scenes which he knew and loved so well. In 1847, the object he so manfully struggled for was attained. From the proceeds of his works, his life insurance, and the copyright of his *Life* which his biographer and son-in-law, Lockhart, generously devoted to this purpose, the debts were paid in full, and the estate of Abbotsford left free of incumbrance ; but his ambition to found a family was not realized ; the male line became extinct not many years after Sir Walter's death, and the estate of Abbotsford fell to a great granddaughter—his only surviving descendant.

It is impossible within the limits of this brief sketch to give any adequate idea of Scott's varied and active life, and of the many ways in which he came into contact with men and things. But it is sufficiently evident that he was no recluse like Wordsworth, that his temperament was not one which led him to think profoundly, to search out the inner meanings and less obvious aspects of things, or to brood over his own moods and feelings. He found happiness in activity and in social life. Though a literary man, and, from childhood, a great reader, he was not prone, as bookish people often are, to over-estimate

the importance of literature. He prided himself first of all on being a man,—a citizen and a gentleman. Scott mingled with the world, looked upon it and was interested in it much as the ordinary man; only his horizon was broader, his interest keener, and his sympathy wider. He cared no more than the average man for abstract generalizations or for scientific analysis. He liked what the multitude like, what appeals to eye and ear,—incidents, persons, the striking and unusual. We have all a natural interest in men and their doings, an interest which is the basis of the universal taste for gossip. And it is this panorama of human life—men and women and the movement of events with which Homer and the ballad singers delighted their unsophisticated audiences. This is also the theme of Scott's works. They do not chiefly represent the writer's reflections, his feelings, or his moods; but they picture the *spectacle* of life as seen from the outside with a breadth and vivacity unsurpassed in our literature except by Shakespeare alone.

The particular *kind* of life and character which Scott presents, is determined by his tastes and temperament. The interest in the past was extraordinarily strong in Scott. He was an antiquarian before he thought of being a poet. But he was not a pure antiquarian. He was not stimulated to the study of antiquity merely by the desire of truth. His interest was based on feeling,—on the feeling for kin, for example, so strongly developed in the typical Scotch character, and on the love of country. From the antiquarian he differed in another way,—in a way which showed that he was really first of all a poet. He desired his antiquarian facts, not for their own sake, but as elements out of which his imagination might picturesquely reconstruct the life of past generations. In *Waverley*, Scott himself clearly indicates the distinction here emphasized. Comparing *Waverley's* interest in the past with the Baron of Bradwardine's, he writes: "The Baron, indeed, only cumbered his memory with matters of fact; the cold, hard, dry outlines which history delineates. Edward, on the contrary, loved to fill up and round the sketch with the colouring of a warm and vivid imagination, which gives light and life to the actors and speakers in the drama of past ages." It was with the past, and more particularly with the past of his own country, that Scott's imagination delighted to busy itself. Since this sort of theme had been neglected in the classical 18th century period, and had been but feebly treated by such recent writers as Mrs. Radcliffe, Scott had,—a very important matter for a writer—a fresh and novel field. To this domain his novels and poems mainly belong.

When we speak of an historic novel or poem, we naturally think, first of all, of one which treats of a period remote from the writer. It will be noted, however, that some of Scott's very best novels treat of periods scarcely more remote than, for example, certain of George Eliot's, to which we would not think of applying the epithet historic. But to these novels of Scott, and to most of his novels, the epithet historic is applicable for a profounder reason than that they present the life of a remote time. History deals not merely with the past, but with the present; but whether treating of present or past, it deals with wide movements, with what affects men in masses,—not with the life of individuals except in as far as they influence the larger body. In this sense Scott's novels are historic. They treat, doubtless, the fortunes of individuals, but nearly always as connected with some great movement of which the historian of the period would have to give an account—as, for example, *Waverley*, *Old Mortality*, *Rob Roy*. In this respect he differs from the majority of novelists,—from his own great contemporary, Jane Austin, from Fielding, and from Thackeray. “The most striking feature of Scott's romances,” says Mr. Hutton, “is that, for the most part, they are pivoted on public rather than mere private interests or passions. With but few exceptions—(*The Antiquary*, *St. Ronan's Well*, and *Guy Mannering* are the most important)—Scott's novels give us an imaginative view, not of mere individuals, but of individuals as they are affected by the public strifes and social divisions of the age. And this it is which gives his books so large an interest for old and young, soldiers and statesmen, the world of society and the recluse, alike. You can hardly read any novel of Scott's and not become better aware what public life and political issues mean. . . . The domestic novel when really of the highest kind, is no doubt a perfect work of art, and an unfailing source of amusement; but it has nothing of the tonic influence, the large instructiveness, the stimulating intellectual air, of Scott's historic tales. Even when Scott is farthest from reality—as in *Ivanhoe* or *The Monastery*—he makes you open your eyes to all sorts of historic conditions to which you would otherwise be blind.”

Scott's imagination was stimulated by the picturesque past, and from childhood onwards, his main interests and favourite pursuits were such as stored his inventive mind with facts, scenes, legends, anecdotes which he might use in embodying this past in artistic forms. He wrote his novels with extraordinary rapidity, yet Goethe's exclamation, “What infinite diligence in preparatory studies,” is amply justified. All this

fund of antiquarian knowledge afforded, however, only the outside garb which, if his work was to have real worth, must clothe real human nature, which is the same now as it was in the past. It is this power of representing human nature that makes his works truly great; and this human nature he learned from life about him. His best characters, his Dandie Dinmonts, and Edie Ochiltrees, his Bailie Nicol Jarvis, his James I., and Elizabeth, are great in virtue of their presenting types of character which belong to all time. It must follow, then, that Scott could depict men and women of his own day, as well as of the past; and this is true, only they must be men and women of a striking and picturesque kind, such as are apt to vanish amidst uniformity and conventions of modern society, but such as Scott found in his rambles in isolated districts. "Scott needed a certain largeness of type, a strongly-marked class-life, and, where it was possible, a free, out-of-doors life, for his delineations. No one could paint beggars and gypsies, and wandering fiddlers, and mercenary soldiers, and peasants and farmers, and lawyers, and magistrates, and preachers, and courtiers, and statesmen, and best of all perhaps, queens and kings, with anything like his ability. But when it came to describing the small differences of manner, differences not due to external habits, so much as to internal sentiment or education, or mere domestic circumstance, he was beyond his proper field." (Hutton's *Scott*.) Scott's genius was broad and vigorous, not intense, subtle and profound. If the common-place in life or character is to interest, it must be by the new light which profound insight, or subtle discrimination throws upon them.

When we pass to the examination of Scott's style, we naturally find analogous peculiarities to those presented by his matter. The general effects produced by his workmanship are excellent; but when we examine minutely, when we dwell upon particular passages or lines, we find it somewhat rough and ready. This defect is a much more serious one in poetry than in prose. The elaborate form of poetry leads us to expect some special felicity or concentration of thought, a nicety in selection of words and imagery that would be superfluous in prose; and these things we do find in the greatest poets. But it is only occasionally in Scott that we stop to dwell on some line or phrase which seems absolutely the best for the purpose. We do not find in him "the magic use of words as distinguished from the mere general effect of vigour, purity, and concentration of purpose." He affords extraordinarily few popular quotations, especially considering the vogue that his poems

have had. In this respect he differs markedly from Wordsworth. "I am sensible," he himself says, "that if there is anything good about my poetry or prose either, it is a hurried frankness of composition, which pleases soldiers, sailors, and young people of bold and active dispositions." Besides this peculiarity, which is so injurious to his poetry, and scarcely affects his novels, Scott is inferior in his poems because they do not exhibit the full breadth of his genius. Many of his best scenes and characters are of a homely character which is not fitted for poetic expression. Shakespeare could not have adequately represented Falstaff or Dogberry in a narrative poem.

But if Scott's poetry has limitations and defects when compared with the work of his great contemporaries, or even with his own work in the sphere of prose, it possesses rare and conspicuous merits. These are set forth by Palgrave in a passage which may be quoted: "Scott's incompleteness of style, which is more injurious to poetry than to prose, his 'careless glance and reckless rhyme,' has been alleged by a great writer of our time as one reason why he is now less popular as a poet than he was in his own day, when from two to three thousand copies of his metrical romances were freely sold. Beside these faults, which are visible almost everywhere, the charge that he wants depth and penetrative insight has been often brought. He does not 'wrestle with the mystery of existence,' it is said; he does not try to solve the problems of human life. Scott, could he have foreseen this criticism, would probably not have been very careful to answer it. He might have allowed its correctness, and said that one man might have this work to do, but his was another. High and enduring pleasure, however conveyed, is the end of poetry. 'Othello' gives this by its profound display of tragic passion; 'Paradise Lost' gives it by its religious sublimity; 'Childe Harold' by its meditative picturesqueness; the 'Lay' by its brilliant delineation of ancient life and manners. These are but scanty samples of the vast range of poetry. In that house are many mansions. All poets may be seers and teachers; but some teach directly, others by a less ostensible and larger process. Scott never lays bare the workings of his mind, like Goethe or Shelley; he does not draw out the moral of the landscape, like Wordsworth; rather after the fashion of Homer and the writers of the ages before criticism, he presents a scene, and leaves it to work its own effect upon the reader. His most perfect and lovely poems, the short songs which occur scattered through the metrical or the prose narratives, are excellent instances. He is the most unselfconscious of our modern poets, perhaps of all our poets; the difference in this respect

between him and his friends Byron and Wordsworth is like a difference of centuries. If they give us the inner spirit of modern life, or of nature, enter into our perplexities, or probe our deeper passions, Scott has a dramatic faculty not less delightful and precious. He hence attained eminent success in one of the rarest and most difficult aims of Poetry,—sustained vigour, clearness, and interest in narration. If we reckon up the poets of the world, we may be surprised to find how very few (dramatists not included) have accomplished this, and may be hence led to estimate Scott's rank in his art more justly. One looks through the English poetry of the first half of the century in vain, unless it be here and there indicated in Keats, for such a power of vividly throwing himself into others as that of Scott. His contemporaries, Crabbe excepted, paint emotions. He paints men when strongly moved. They draw the moral, but he can invent the fable. It would be rash to try to strike a balance between men, each so great in his own way; the picture of one could not be painted with the other's palette; all are first rate in their kind; and every reader can choose the style which gives him the highest, healthiest and most lasting pleasure."

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ROSABELLE.

This ballad comes from the *Lay of the Last Minstrel*, published in 1805. At the wedding festival of the hero and heroine of the *Lay*, three ballads are represented as being sung, after the ancient fashion, for the entertainment of the guests; the first of these is by a border minstrel, the second by a poet from the English court, the third is the poem before us. It is sung by Harold, bard of the St. Clairs, a noble family who held the earldom of Orkney, and also possessions at Roslin, some six miles from Edinburgh.

Harold was born where restless seas
Howl round the storm swept Orcades.

His spirit accordingly bore the impress of the wild aspects of nature to which his youth was accustomed ; and, in addition, of the influence of Norse legend and literature which has reached so far as the Orkneys.

And much of wild and wonderful
In these rude isles might fancy call ;
For thither came, in times afar,
Stern Lochlin's sons of roving war,
The Norsemen, train'd to spoil and blood

.
And there in many a stormy vale
The scald has told his wondrous tale ;

.
And thus had Harold in his youth,
Learn'd many a Saga's rhyme uncouth.

In time, however,

To Roslin's bowers young Harold came,
When by sweet glen and greenwood tree,
He learn'd a milder minstrelsy ;
Yet something of the Northern spell
Mix'd with the softer numbers well.

(See *Lay of the Last Minstrel*, canto vi., stanzas xxi. and xxii.) Scott assigns the events of the *Lay*, and hence the supposed singing of this ballad to the middle of the 16th century. Jeffrey says: "The third song is intended to represent that wild style of composition which prevailed among the bards of the northern continent, somewhat softened and adorned by the minstrel's residence in the south. We prefer it upon the whole to either of the two former, and shall give it entire to our readers, who will probably be struck by the poetical effect of the dramatic form into which it is thrown, and of the indirect description by which everything is most expressively told, without one word of distinct narrative."

Professor Hales (who in the introduction to his *Larger English Poems* uses *Rosabelle* in order to illustrate in detail his ideas as to the teaching of English) says of the poem: "Perhaps its supreme virtue is the simple vigour with which its pictures are drawn. There is no personal intrusion ; there are no vain cries and groans ; there is no commenting and explaining. The pictures tell their own story, and tell it so vividly and thrillingly that nothing more is needed."

The poem falls into four parts, each with a distinct office of its own, and the transitions from one part to the other are sudden and bold.

1. Harold addresses the ladies in his audience more especially for the reasons indicated in the next three lines.

6. *ladye*. The old spelling is used in harmony with the antique character of the poem.

7. **Castle Ravensheuch**. "A large and strong castle, now ruinous, situated between Kirkcaldy and Dysart, on a steep crag washed by the Firth of Forth. It was long a principal residence of the Barons of Roslin." (Scott.) The name means Raven's crag.

10. *inch*. *Isle*, a Celtic word found often in proper names.

sea-mews. Sea-gulls.

14. *swathed*. In first ed. "roll'd."

17. Rosabelle's disclaimer of the motive at the beginning of this stanza, and of the following, indicates the fact that Lindesay's heir has no inconsiderable interest for her.

21. *the ring*. A favourite pastime with knights in later feudal times. They showed their skill by carrying off, on the point of the lance, a ring suspended from a beam, whilst riding at full speed.

25. **Roslin**. "The beautiful chapel of Roslin is still in tolerable preservation. It was founded in 1446, by William St. Clair, Prince of Orkney, is in the most florid style of Gothic architecture. Among the profuse carvings on the pillars and buttresses, the rose is frequently introduced, in allusion to the name, with which, however, the flower has no connection; the etymology being Ross-lincke, the promontory of the linn, or waterfall. The chapel is said to appear on fire previous to the death of any of his descendants. This superstition is probably of Norwegian origin, and may have been imported by the earls of Orkney into their Lothian dominions." (Scott.)

30. *ruddied*. In the first ed. *red-den'd*.

31. **Dryden's**. Name of a place in the neighbourhood, to the west of Hawthornden.

32. **Hawthornden**. In the neighbourhood of Roslin, inseparably connected with the name of Drummond, a Scottish poet of the opening of the 17th century, who lived there. "In all Scotland there is no spot more finely varied,—more rich, graceful, or luxuriant,—than the cliffs, caves, and wooded banks of the river Esk, and the classic shades

of Hawthornden. In the immediate neighbourhood is Roslin chapel, one of the most interesting of ruins; and the whole course of the stream and the narrow glen is like the groundwork of some fairy dream." (Chambers' *Cyclopedia of English Literature*.)

33. Deep sacristy. In the first ed., "Both vaulted crypt." *Sacristy* is the place where the sacred vessels and vestments are kept, the vestry.

Deep. "Far receding, extending far back." (Stuart.) If "deep" be taken in its more usual sense, its being on fire would not be visible at a distance.

39. See note on l. 25.

41. **pinnet.** Pinnacle.

51. In the first ed.

But the kelpie rung and the mermaids sung.

In this line and in line 49, there is a what is called a leonine rhyme, *i.e.*, a rhyme within the line. Note also the number of trisyllabic feet in this stanza.

THE OUTLAW.

This song (the title is Palgrave's) is to be found in *Rokeby*, published 1812. The poem receives its name from Rokeby, near Greta Bridge, in Yorkshire, where the scene is laid, and narrates events supposed to take place immediately after the battle of Marston Moor, July 3rd, 1684. The song before us is sung in a cave to a band of revelling outlaws by one of their number, a pale stripling in whom lingers some remnants of better feeling.

With desperate merriment he sang,
The cavern to his chorus rang;
Yet mingled with his reckless glee
Remorse's bitter agony.

Its form was, perhaps, suggested to Scott by the famous old ballad of *The Nut Brown Maid*, which it resembles in metre; further, the old ballad is a dialogue between one who professes himself an outlaw and a lady who is determined to share his lot.

Rokeby is notable for the number of fine songs in it; Scott himself was specially satisfied with this one. He says in a letter to a friend, "There are two or three songs, and particularly one in praise of Brignall Banks, which I trust you will like, because, *entre nous*, I like them my-

self." Palgrave says: "This poem exemplifies the peculiar skill with which Scott employs proper names—a rarely misleading sign of true poetical genius." These proper names belong to places in the neighbourhood of Rokeby, which itself lies in the angle formed by the junction of the Greta with the Tees. *Brignall Banks* are higher up on the Greta.

9-12. These four lines, and the corresponding lines in the other stanzas have, in Scott's text, the word CHORUS prefixed to them, as the last stanza of Palgrave's text.

17. **read.** *Interpret:* the word thus employed carries with it the associations of antique poetry, where it is often found in this sense.

27. **ranger.** Keeper of a forest.

37. **musketoon.** A short musket or carbine with which dragoons, who were originally mounted infantry, were armed.

40. **tuck of drum.** "The beating of the drum. Tucket in Shakespeare means a flourish of trumpets. Both words are derived from the It. *toccata*, a prelude." (Macmillan's Note.)

51. **The fiend, etc.** Jack o' Lantern, or Will o' the Wisp who with his light was supposed to lead travellers to destruction. There is a variant of this line in the MS.:

The goblin light on fen or mead.

THE ROVER.

This song (again the title is Palgrave's), like the last, is from *Rokeby*, sung in the same place and circumstances by the same stripling,

Edmond of Winston is his name;
The hamlet sounded with the fame
Of early hopes his childhood gave,—
Now centred all in Brignall's cave!
I watch him well—his wayward course
Shows oft a tincture of remorse.
Some early love-shaft grazed his heart,
And oft the scar will ache and smart.
Yet he is useful; of the rest,
By fits, the darling and the jest,
His harp, his story, and his lay,
Oft aid the idle hours away,
When unemploy'd, each fiery mate
Is ripe for mutinous debate.

(See canto vi., stanza xxix.)

The passage quoted gives the key to the song before us ; the speaker is bidding adieu to his sweetheart, with the thought that the lawless course upon which he is entering must sever them forever.

Scott says in a note : “ The last verse of this song is taken from the fragment of an old Scottish ballad, of which I only recollected two verses when the first edition of *Rokeby* was published. Mr. Thomas Sheridan kindly pointed out to me an entire copy of this beautiful song, which seems to express the fortunes of some follower of the Stewart family.” Scott then quotes the old song, which will be found in the Appendix to the present volume, and should be compared with Scott’s imitation.

4. *rue*. A *bitter* herb : on account of its resemblance to the word *rue*, it seems to have been symbolical of repentance. “ There’s rue for you ; and here’s some for me,” says Ophelia to the Queen, *Hamlet*, iv., 4.

5. MS. variant : “ A laughing eye, a dauntless mien.”

7. *doublet*. A kind of waistcoat.

Lincoln green. A green cloth made in Lincoln, commonly worn by foresters, etc., and often mentioned in old ballads.

12. *fain*. “ *Fain*, in old English and Scotch, expresses, I think, a propensity to give and receive pleasurable emotions, a sort of fondness which may, without harshness, I think, be applied to a rose in the act of blooming.” (Scott.)

16. Scott’s MS. suggests “ Greta ” or “ Scottish ” as variant for river, perhaps feeling impropriety in the use of “ shore ” in connection with “ river.”

JOCK OF HAZELDEAN.

“ The first stanza of this ballad is ancient. The others were written [1816] for Mr. Campbell’s *Albyn’s Anthology*. ” (Scott’s Note.)

4. *sall*. Dialectic for *shall*.

7. *loot*. Dialectic, *did let*.

11-12. Errington, Langley-dale, and Hazeldean are presumably names of actual localities, but are not to be found in the maps. It is evident that the first two named are on the English, and Hazeldean on the

Scottish side of the Borders. Langley-dale is the name of a township in Durham, five miles from Barnard Castle, but this is rather remote from the Border.

19. **managed.** *Trained*; cf. "His horses are bred better; for besides that they are fair with their feeding, they are taught their manage, and to that end riders dearly hired." (*As You Like It*, ii., 13.)

BYRON.

GEORGE GORDON, LORD BYRON, was of very ancient, as well as aristocratic lineage. The family is traced back to the Norman Conquest, and was ennobled in the time of the civil war in recognition of the services of Sir John Byron in the royalist cause. The Byrons claimed to be descended from the old Norse rovers; and, whatever may have previously been the characters of its members, it certainly exhibited, in the immediate predecessors of the poet, a wild, passionate, and irregular strain. His grand-uncle, from whom he inherited the title, was known as the "wicked lord," killed a friend in a duel, and was an eccentric outcast from society in his later days. The poet's grandfather, Admiral John Byron, led a life of extraordinary adventure; and his son, the poet's father, Captain Byron, was the hero of some scandalous experiences. He was seemingly fascinating and adroit, certainly heartless and profligate. His second wife, Miss Gordon of Gight, an Aberdeenshire heiress, who claimed descent from the Stuarts, was a foolish woman of ungovernable temper. Having squandered with extraordinary rapidity the property of this second wife, Captain Byron deserted her shortly after the birth of their only child, George Gordon, which took place on January 22nd, 1788. The consequence was that the young boy, notwithstanding his aristocratic descent, was brought up amidst rather humble surroundings in a small house in Aberdeen, whither his mother had retired. The mother, according to her mood, overindulged or abused the boy, flinging the poker at him and reproaching him for his lameness. This deformity, which was serious enough to interfere with his boyish activity, and mar his otherwise unusual personal beauty, was keenly felt by Byron throughout his life, and doubtless embittered his boyish days. We hear, too, of his spending hours in agony through unwise attempts by means of irons to remedy the defect. In childhood, as afterwards, he was "passionate, sullen, defiant of authority, but singularly amenable to kindness." At the age of six, through the death of a cousin, he became heir to the title; and in 1798 the mother removed into the neighbourhood of the family estate of Newstead Abbey. His education was of an irregular kind until he was sent to Harrow in 1801. Here he formed some warm friendships, seems to have read rather extensively, but never to have been disciplined, or to have disciplined himself, to regular, steady work. In 1805 he went up to Oxford.

Before that date, he had already conceived an ardent passion for a certain Miss Chaworth, older than himself, who did not reciprocate his feelings. She soon married, and the unhappy issue of this love affair, which, in the case of most boys of his age, would have been a mere passing fancy, may, perhaps, have produced some permanent effect on the poet's passionate temperament. At Oxford, where he remained three years, he seems not to have made even a pretext to serious study. He formed intimacies with a number of his contemporaries,—some of them, at least, men of brilliant intellectual endowments; but the greater part of his time was spent in swimming, shooting, and in other much less innocent forms of amusement indulged in by the idle undergraduates. He had literary ambitions, however, and in 1807 published a volume of short poems entitled *Hours of Idleness*. As was to be expected from the age of the writer, it had no special merits, and was reviewed in an extremely contemptuous and galling style by the *Edinburgh*. The young author, who all through life was extremely sensitive to criticism, was intensely mortified and enraged, and to exact vengeance for the attack and relieve his anger, he set about writing a satirical poem in the style of Pope. Meanwhile he left the university, plunged into all sorts of dissipation in London, came of age, and took possession of the family estate. This was heavily incumbered with debts, the ancestral home was in a half-ruinous condition, and Byron had no money to repair it; the neighbouring gentry, too, turned him a cold shoulder. He had no person of experience to counsel and help him; his relative and legal guardian, Lord Carlisle, repelled his advances. He took his seat in the House of Lords, but about this, too, there was none of the éclat for which the proud and sensitive young spirit looked. One consolation he had in the success of his satire *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*, which was published in the spring of 1809, a poem primarily aimed against his critic in the *Edinburgh*, but in fact attacking in an indiscriminate and ill-natured fashion the literary men of the day. It manifested undoubted talent, and had a success at the time beyond its merits.

In the summer of 1809, having succeeded in borrowing money at a very high rate of interest, Byron, in company with his college friend, Hobhouse, set out on a tour which he proposed should extend as far as Persia and India. The record of the more striking scenes of the tour is contained in the first two cantos of *Childe Harold*. The friends passed through Portugal and Spain on horseback, visited Malta, travelled through Albania and Greece, and reached Constantinople in May, 1810.

Thence, having parted from Hobhouse, Byron went to Greece again, where he remained another year, and would still have continued his travels, had not his money given out. He returned to England about midsummer, 1811. Almost immediately afterwards his mother died, and one of his most intimate friends was drowned. Death had made other gaps in the circle of his acquaintances, and Byron was plunged into deep melancholy. He was worried, too, by the complicated condition of his pecuniary affairs and the lack of money; he thought of leaving England for good and settling in "one of the fairest islands of the East."

But all this was changed by the extraordinary success of the first two cantos of *Childe Harold*, which appeared in February, 1812. Byron, as he says, awoke one morning and found himself famous. The book ran through seven editions in four weeks. The author was fêted and courted on all sides. During the next three or four years, he was one of the most conspicuous personages in London society, mingling both with the fashionable world and in literary circles. Women, especially, overwhelmed him with their adulation. One of the notable men whom he met in these days was Scott, whose account of him may be quoted: "He was often melancholy, almost gloomy. When I observed him in this humour I used either to wait until it went off of its own accord, or till some natural and easy mode occurred of leading him into conversation, when the shadows almost always left his countenance, like the mist arising from a landscape. I think I also remarked in his temper starts of suspicion, when he seemed to pause and consider whether there had not been a secret and perhaps offensive meaning in something that was said to him. In this case I also judged it best to let his mind, like a troubled spring, work itself clear, which it did in a minute or two. A downright steadiness of manner was the way to his good opinion. Will Rose, looking by accident at his feet, saw him scowling furiously; but on his showing no consciousness, his lordship resumed his easy manner. What I liked about him, besides his boundless genius, was his generosity of spirit as well as of purse, and his utter contempt of all the affectations of literature. He liked Moore and me, because, with all our other differences, we were both good-natured fellows, not caring to maintain our dignity, enjoying the *mot-pour-rire*. He wrote from impulse, never from effort, and therefore I have always reckoned Burns and Byron the most genuine poetic geniuses of my time, and of the half century before me. We have many men of high poetic talents, but none of that ever-gushing and perennial fountain of natural

waters." During these years Byron's success in literature was not less phenomenal than his success in society. He poured forth a series of poetical romances, *The Giaour*, *The Bride of Abydos*, *The Corsair*, *Lara*, *The Siege of Corinth*, and *Parisina*. They were suggested by, and partly modelled after, the poetical tales of Scott, but differed widely from these in tone and spirit. They eclipsed Scott's poetry with the reading public, with whom they enjoyed an extraordinary success—a success partly dependent on extraneous circumstances, and doubtless beyond their merits. "They followed one another like brilliant fireworks. They all exhibit a command of words, a sense of melody, and a flow of rhythm and rhyme, which mastered Moore and even Scott on their own ground. None of them are wanting in passages, as 'He that hath bent him o'er the dead,' and the description of Alp leaning against a column, which strike deeper than any verse of either of those writers. But there is an air of melodrama in them all. Harmonious delights of novel readers, they will not stand against the winnowing wind of deliberate criticism. They harp on the same string without the variations of a Paganini. They are potentially endless reproductions of one phase of an ill-regulated mind—the picture of the same quasi-melancholy, vengeful man, who knows no friend but a dog, and reads on the tombs of the great only 'the glory and the nothing of a name,' the exile who cannot flee from himself, the wandering outlaw of his own dark mind, who has not loved the world nor the world him—

Whose heart was form'd for softness, warp'd by wrong,
Betray'd too early, and beguiled too long."

(Nichol's *Byron*.)

In January, 1815, Byron married an heiress, Miss Milbanke; in December a daughter was born; in January of the following year Lady Byron left her husband, and henceforth refused to live with him. The reasons of this step were not known to the public; notwithstanding, the public took sides with the wife and poured a flood of obloquy on their quondam favourite. To unbounded adulation succeeded detraction no less unmeasured. "Byron was accused of every possible and impossible vice. He was compared to Sardanapalus, Nero, Tiberius, the Duke of Orleans, Heliogabalus, and Satan, all the most disreputable persons mentioned in sacred and profane history; his benevolences were maligned, his most disinterested action perverted." "Upon what grounds," wrote the poet in 1819, "the public formed their opinion, I am not aware; but it was general, and it was decisive. Of me and of mine they knew little, except that I had written poetry, was a noble-

man, had married, became a father, and was involved in differences with my wife and her relatives—no one knew why, because the persons complaining refused to state their grievances. The press was active and scurrilous ; . . . my name—which had been a knightly and noble one since my fathers helped to conquer the kingdom for William the Norman—was tainted. I felt that, if what was whispered and muttered and murmured was true, I was unfit for England ; if false, England was unfit for me. I withdrew ; but this was not enough. In other countries—in Switzerland, in the shadow of the Alps, and by the blue depth of the lake—I was pursued and breathed upon by the same blight. I crossed the mountains, but it was the same ; so I went a little farther, and settled myself by the waves of the Adriatic, like the stag at bay, who betakes himself to the waters.”

On the 25th of April, 1816, Byron embarked from England for the last time ; visited Waterloo ; ascended the Rhine ; and settled for the summer on the Lake of Geneva, where Shelley was his near neighbour. The two poets were much in one another’s society. With Shelley, and subsequently in the company of Hobhouse, Byron visited some of the most beautiful parts of Switzerland. During these months *Childe Harold*, canto iii., *The Prisoner of Chillon*, *The Dream*, and other poems were written. In November he settled in Venice. In the spring of 1817 he spent six weeks in a trip through Italy, visiting in succession Arqua, Ferrara, Florence, Rome and its neighbourhood ; on his return to Venice in the summer he embodied his impressions in the fourth canto of *Childe Harold*. When at Rome he sat for a bust to Thorwaldsen ; in regard to the sitting the sculptor told an anecdote very characteristic of the poet : “ Byron placed himself opposite to me, but at once began to put on a quite different expression from the one usual to him. ‘ Will you not sit still,’ said I. ‘ You need not assume that look.’ ‘ That is my expression,’ said Byron.’ ‘ Indeed,’ said I ; and I then represented him as I wished. When the bust was finished he said, ‘ It is not at all like me ; my expression is more unhappy.’ ” The American painter, West, also tells us that “ he was a bad sitter ; he assumed a countenance that did not belong to him, as though he were thinking of a frontispiece for *Childe Harold*.” At Venice he plunged into a wild career of dissipation, from which he was rescued by the influence of the Countess Guiccioli. To be near her, he removed to Ravenna ; there, in August, 1821, Shelley visited him, and writes thence : “ Lord Byron is greatly improved in every respect—in genius, in temper, in moral views, in health and happiness.” Byron became con-

nected with Carbonari, a secret organization for the liberation of Italy, and in consequence, found it advisable to leave Ravenna. He next took up his residence on the western shore of Italy, partly for the sake of being near Shelley, whom he calls "the most companionable man under thirty" he had ever met. These years in Italy had been years of great literary activity. All his really great works, beginning with the third canto of *Childe Harold*, were written after his "banishment". Among the more important of these works were *Manfred* and *Cain*,—both dramatic pieces, though not suited for the stage,—and *Beppo*, a light satirical narrative. In the latter poem he hit upon a vein which was well suited to him, and which he followed out in his last great poem, *Don Juan*. Notwithstanding the odium which attached to him personally, his works found a wide circulation in England, and his poetic influence both in England and the Continent was great; but *Cain*, by its alleged irreverence and impiety, raised a storm of indignation in his native country. This feeling was intensified by the *Vision of Judgment*, a satire on Southey and George III., and by *Don Juan*, where all things that society deems most sacred are held up to ridicule.

Byron's sympathies, both as expressed in his writings and in more private utterances, were with the cause of liberalism in Europe. He denounced oppression everywhere, and was intensely opposed to the reactionary principles of the Holy Alliance. In Italy he connected himself with the Carbonari, as already stated. "Whatever," he said, "I can do by money, means, or person I will venture freely for their freedom. It is no great matter, supposing that Italy could be liberated, who or what is sacrificed. It is a grand object, the very body of politics: only think—a free Italy!" The Italian attempt, however, collapsed, but in 1823, an opportunity to help a struggling nationality presented itself. Since 1821 Greece had been carrying on a war for freedom; English sympathizers had formed a committee to lend them assistance, and suggested to Byron that he should go to Greece to represent them and administer their funds. On July 14th, 1823, having raised all the money he could, he set out for Greece, and his procedure seemed to indicate real ability for active life, and the likelihood of his doing great services for the cause. Unfortunately his constitution had been undermined by his irregular life, and he fell a victim to fever at Mesolonghi on the 19th of April, 1824.

Opinions vary much in regard to Byron's work and character, but no one can deny him the possession of a strong and imposing personality,—“a personality,” said Goethe “in eminence such as has never been

yet, and is not likely to come again." The immediate impression he made upon the world at large was greater than that of any other English man of letters. A strong and passionate nature which he had inherited from his ancestors, was found in him united with an abnormal sensitiveness. He was naturally affectionate ; his feelings for his friends had the warmth of passion ; we hear of his weeping, trembling, turning faint, after a fashion more usual with women than men. Indeed, Finlay, the historian, who knew him in his latest days in Greece, says : "It seemed as if two different souls occupied his body alternately. One was feminine, and full of sympathy ; the other masculine, characterized by clear judgment, and by a rare power of presenting for consideration those facts only which were required for forming a decision." A nature so sensitive, and yet so ardent and masterful, required the most careful discipline and culture to prevent its coming into collision with the world about it, and bringing upon itself all sorts of unhappiness. But this steadying discipline, Byron altogether lacked ; the circumstances of his life were to an unusual degree unfavourable to the production of a well-balanced character which might have adjusted itself to its environment. In his most impressionable years he was under the care of a foolish and hysterical mother. He knew that he was the heir to a title and an ancient estate ; and this, especially in connection with the mean and narrow surroundings of his childish days, would give him an importance in his own eyes, and in those of others, very unfavourable to a wholesome development of character. Neither in boyhood nor on his emergence into manhood, was there any wise elder friend or relative to influence him by example or by helpful advice. For his mother he could have no respect ; his legal guardian, the Earl of Carlisle, kept aloof from him ; he started in life very ignorant of the world, and with absurd ideas as to his own claims, from which he could only escape through experiences intensely painful to his proud and sensitive spirit. He had all the wilfulness, moodiness, and folly of a spoiled child. And, strangely enough, the process of "spoiling" was continued in his maturer life. "He came," says Macaulay, "into the world ; and the world treated him as his mother had treated him, sometimes with fondness, sometimes with cruelty, never with justice. It indulged him without discrimination and punished him without discrimination. He was truly a spoiled child, not merely the spoiled child of his parent, but the spoiled child of nature, the spoiled child of fortune, the spoiled child of fame, the spoiled child of society. His first poems were received with a contempt which, feeble as they were, they did not absolutely deserve. The poem which

he published on his return from his travels was, on the other hand, extolled far above its merit. At twenty-four he found himself on the pinnacle of literary fame, with Scott, Wordsworth, Southey, and a crowd of other distinguished writers beneath his feet. There is scarcely an instance in history of so sudden a rise to so dizzy an eminence. Everything that could stimulate, and everything that could gratify the strongest propensities of our nature, the gaze of a hundred drawing-rooms, the acclamations of the whole nation, the applause of applauded men, the love of lovely women, all his world and all the glory of it were at once offered to a youth to whom nature had given violent passions, and whom education had never taught to control them. He lived as many men live who have no similar excuse to plead for their faults. But his countrymen and his countrywomen would love and admire him. They were resolved to see in his excesses only the flash and outbreak of that same fiery mind which glowed in his poetry. . . . Everything, it seemed, was to be forgiven to youth, rank, and genius. Then came the reaction. Society, capricious in its indignation, as it had been capricious in its fondness, flew into a rage with its froward and petted darling. He had been worshipped with an irrational idolatry. He was persecuted with an irrational fury."

The natural result of such experiences upon such a nature was the production of boundless egoism and self-consciousness. "Byron never wrote," says Macaulay, "without some reference direct or indirect to himself." The fictitious personages in his narrative and dramatic poems exist merely to give poetic expression to himself. Hence his genius is lyrical, not dramatic; subjective, not objective. One result of his self-consciousness is the affectation which is constantly made a theme of reproach against him and his poems. When, in his poetry, he is not carried away by the strength of his own emotion, he thinks of how he looks in the public eye, and inevitably loses the note of sincerity. He exaggerates or falsifies his thought or mood in order to impress his readers, just as he affected an unnatural expression when he sat for Thorwaldsen and West.

In life, his egoism manifested itself in an implicit claim that he made upon the world for the satisfaction of his desires. The idea that his life should be one of renunciation, of service to his fellows, did not enter his mind. Nor was there anything to lead him to such a conception of existence. There were, in his case, no such personal ties such as often teach the most selfish something of self-sacrifice. In his frivolous youth

no great beliefs or principles had been impressed upon him, to which he might devote his energies. He said himself: "I deny nothing, but I doubt everything." And the times in which he lived, the period of reaction against the French Revolution, is notably a period in politics and religion which lacked convictions, sincerity, and high principle. There was nothing, then, to take Byron out of himself. He had no aim except to gratify the clamorous desires of his nature; and he set about gratifying them in some of their coarsest forms. Dissipation had the same effect which it has had on all voluptuaries from the writer of *Ecclesiastes* down. There followed the disgust, the vexation of spirit, the dissatisfaction with self which veils itself under the form of dissatisfaction with the world. Hence, the predominant tone of Byron's work,—its melancholy, its cynicism, its mingled sadness, frivolity, and bitterness. But it is at least the melancholy and cynicism, not of a paltry and ignoble, but of a strong and rich nature.

His cynicism found in the surroundings amidst which he was placed a soil favourable to its growth. The world in which Byron moved was the world of fashion and of pleasure—the sort of society which has always been proverbial for exhibiting frivolity, falsehood, and ingratitude in their most striking forms, which is, therefore, the natural nurse and theme of the cynical spirit. In Byron's time, too, this society was in one of its most hateful phases, typified in its highest product, the Prince Regent, the so-called "first gentleman of Europe." "Byron," says Arnold, "found our nation, after its long and victorious struggle with revolutionary France, fixed on a system of established facts and dominant ideas which revolted him. . . . The falsehood, cynicism, insolence, misgovernment, oppression, with their consequent unfailing crop of human misery, which were produced by this state of things, roused Byron to irreconcilable revolt and battle." When this society took part against him, and ostracized him, he turned upon it, as he had turned upon his first reviewer, but with indefinitely greater vigour. He held up to ridicule its sham virtues, its half-beliefs, its hypocritical decencies, and its rottenness, with a power gained from direct familiarity, and with the courage and vigour of a strong and sensitive nature persecuted to madness.

The spirit of discontent with existing society, institutions, and principles, together with his strong sense of individuality and his felt need of room to give it play, allied itself naturally with one of the main tendencies of political feeling in his day—the spirit of revolt and liberty, the still living spirit of the French Revolution which was stirring oppo-

sition throughout Europe against the reactionary measures of the Holy Alliance. "Of what manner," asks Morley in his essay on Byron, "is this spirit? Is it not a masterful and impatient yearning after many good things, unsubdued and uninformed either by a just knowledge of the time and the means which are needed to bring to men the fruits of their hope, or by a fit appreciation of orderly and tranquil activity for the common service, as the normal type of the individual life. And this is precisely the temper and the spirit of Byron.... So his poetry gives expression to the feelings of a whole generation, that lifted up its voice in heartfelt complaint and wailing against the conceptions, forms, and rulers, human and divine, of a society that the inward faith had abandoned, but which clung to every outward ordinance; which only remembered that man had property, and forgot that he had spirit." The spirit of revolt is a negative one. Its remedy for evil is liberty and the independence of each individual. It fails to perceive that these things are only good as meaning the absence of tyranny, and oppression, but that in themselves they contribute nothing to the amelioration of the condition of men, and that all advance has, in fact, come from the combination of men with one another. It is a defect, then, in Byron's work that he has no solution for the woes of the individual or of humanity. So Byron writes: "I have simplified my politics into an utter detestation of all existing governments." Again: "Give me a republic. The king-times are fast vanishing." It is because his poetry voices a wide-spread movement,—embodies, with eloquence, poetical beauty and force, a spirit which continued many years after his death to influence a vast number of individuals, and to shape the destinies of Europe, that Byron has been the best known and most influential of English poets on the Continent. "It is since Byron," writes Mazzini, himself a great leader in the revolutionary movement, "that we Continentalists have learned to study Shakespeare and other English writers. From him dates the sympathy of all the true-hearted amongst us for this land of liberty, whose true vocation he so worthily represented among the oppressed. He led the genius of Britain on a pilgrimage through all Europe."

Notwithstanding all his misanthropy, then, Byron had a deep interest in, and sympathy with, the cause of man. "Even his misanthropy is only an inverted form of social solicitude. His practical zeal for good and noble causes might teach us this. He never grudged either money or time or personal peril for the cause of Italian freedom, and his life was the measure and the cost of his interest in the

liberty of Greece." (Morley.) Both in this sphere and elsewhere, we find that Byron's interests are with practical matters, with substantial, existing things, not with recondite theories or imaginary visions. He keeps closer to the solid earth than most poets, and hence his poetry more readily attracts the ordinary man. We can all see that a great deal of what Wordsworth, or Shelley, or Keats treat in their poetry, is quite remote from the experience and interest of the every-day reader. Their very subtlety and insight led them to write of things beyond the scope of ordinary people. But Byron in his themes, and his reflections, is decidedly commonplace. He is no philosopher. "The moment he reflects," says Goethe, "he is a child." His thoughts are obvious, not profound. When Wordsworth looks on nature, he sees deeper than other people; he notes beauties and effects which escape the ordinary eye. So he is a revealer, he opens our eyes; but he is not so easy to follow as Byron, to whom—whether he contemplates a natural scene, or an historic one, or a work of art or a ruin,—occur the reflections, feelings, and ideas that would occur to most people, only with him they possess extraordinary vivacity and intensity. We can see this by comparing his magnificent description of the Falls of Terni with a description by Wordsworth or Tennyson. "He had an enlarged and generous sense of energetic interest in real transactions, and a capacity of being moved and raised by them into those lofty moods of emotion which in more spiritual natures are only kindled by contemplation of the vast infinitudes that compass the human soul round about." He is the ordinary man on a large scale, with extraordinary force and emotional power. There is, therefore, a certain resemblance between Scott and Byron. Both were men of the world, and regarded the world from the ordinary worldly point of view. Hence they were both extremely popular poets. Byron was in some respects nearer that point of view than Scott; for Scott's great interest in the past and remote is not so natural as Byron's interest in the present. There are, of course, other and more fundamental differences: the difference between a wholesome spirit in sympathy with men, and a morbid spirit embittered against them; and the difference between a dramatic artist who paints the external world and effaces himself, and the subjective writer who makes the public the confidant of his most private life and inner feelings, who compresses his own mood upon external scenes, who "employs ideal forms to invest his own person with a poetical character."

The lack of fineness and profundity, and the impatience of minute

work, which these two poets shared, has a similar effect upon their style. Like Scott, Byron is often defective in his rhymes, and the other minutiae of his art; and is wanting in exquisite finish in general, and absolute perfection and felicity of expression in occasional passages. But the positive blots on his style are more frequent and more offensive than those of Scott, while his best passages are finer. Swinburne notes particularly his defective metre: "No poet of equal or inferior [superior?] rank ever had so bad an ear. His smoother cadences are often vulgar and facile; his fresher notes are often incomplete and inharmonious. His verse stumbles and jingles, stammers and halts, where there is most need for a soft and even pace of musical sound." "Some," says Arnold, "of Byron's most crying faults as a man,—his vulgarity, his affectation—are really akin to the faults of commonness, of want of art, in his workmanship as a poet. . . . Byron is so negligent in his poetical style, he is often, to say the truth, so slovenly, slipshod, and infelicitous, he is so little haunted by the true artist's fine passion for the correct use and consummate management of words that he may be described as having for this artistic gift the insensibility of a barbarian." He lacked the patience and self-discipline, he lacked the single-minded devotion to art without thought of self, requisite for the production of perfect works of art. Like Scott, he wrote with great rapidity. The *Bride of Abydos* is said to have been written in four, the *Corsair* in ten days, the third canto of *Childe Harold* in a few weeks, the fourth, in its original draft of 126 stanzas, in a month. "I can never recast anything," he says. "I am like the tiger, if I miss my first spring, I go grumbling back to my jungle." He wrote to relieve himself, or impress the public, not to produce something perfectly beautiful. He falls beneath Scott in the broader technical excellencies of structure, unity, development, etc. His poems consist of passages of greater or less excellence, strung together without much connection or plan. Yet there is a force and variety in Byron's works which carries us along, so that in such poems as *Childe Harold* and *Don Juan* we scarcely note this lack. Here, indeed, we come upon the qualities that give Byron's verse its permanent place in literature. Two critics, as different as Swinburne and Matthew Arnold, agree in according to his poetry "the splendid and imperishable excellence which covers all his offences and outweighs all his defects: *the excellence of sincerity and strength*." To be sure, as has been said already, he was often affected, hence neither sincere or strong; but when at his best,—when his emotion really mastered

him, "then at last came forth into light that true and puissant personality, with its direct strokes, its ever-welling force, its satire, its energy, and its agony." There is a fascination to the reader in the mere sense of the power and ease with which the poet handles the language; even when his expression is imperfect, it is marked by perfect fluency and extemporaneousness. This force and impetuosity of his character drew him into sympathy with the mighty aspects of things; mountains and the ocean, the roar of the elements, tempest and shipwreck, and battles, are the spheres of description in which he most excels.

It is not, however, in his uniformly serious poems, that the full compass of Byron's genius is manifest. In actual life, he was by no means always plunged in gloom. He was fond of the world and its pleasures, of society, and clubs, and gossip. His flippancy was a characteristic that struck specially an observer in his latest years. But he possessed qualities which enabled him to see through, and in a measure despise, the pettiness and superficiality of society; the treatment which society accorded him quickened this insight, and he had a rare gift of courage; hence he is a great satirist. It is therefore in such a poem as *Don Juan*, which, however objectionable its moral tone, exhibits the whole breadth of his genius, that Byron is at his best. There he passes lightly from grave to gay, from sentiment to satire; there he can reveal all his dearly-bought knowledge of the world, all the store of natural imagery with which his journeyings to and fro had furnished him; there, above all, he throws aside all his affectations and speaks with absolute sincerity. There, even his lack of metrical finish, his indifference to minutiae, his careless abandon, his impetuous ease, are in harmony with his changeful theme, and add to, instead of detracting from, the general effect.

BIBLIOGRAPHY.—Life and Letters by Moore; life by Nichol (*Eng. Men of Letters*), by L. Stephen (*Dict. of Nat. Biog.*). The poetical works are published in a variety of forms by John Murray; the regular eds. of *Childe Harold* contain many illustrative notes, it has also been annotated for school use by H. F. Tozer (*Clar. Press*), and by Rolfe (Houghton, Mifflin); from these sources the notes to the present volume have been mainly drawn. Critical essays by M. Arnold (*Introd. to Selections*), by John Morley (*Critical Essays*), by Swinburne (*Essays*), by Symonds (*Ward's Eng. Poets*), by Mazzini (*Goethe and Byron*), Dowden (*Studies in Literature*), Hutton, etc. A bibliography is appended to *Byron* in the *Great Writers Series*.

CHILDE HAROLD.

CANTO IV.

The first two cantos of this poem were written during Byron's first continental tour, and contain the impressions of his journey. Upon his return to England, in the summer of 1811, he submitted to his friend, Dallas, a satirical poem entitled *Hints from Horace*, which he intended to publish. His friend was much disappointed with it, and expressed his surprise that the journey had been productive of so little. "Upon this," says Dallas, "Lord Byron told me that he had occasionally written short poems, besides a great many stanzas in Spenser's measure, relative to the countries he had visited. 'They are not worth troubling you with, but you shall have them all with you, if you like.' So I came by *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*. He took it from a small trunk, with a number of verses. He said they had been read but by one person, who had found very little to commend and much to condemn; that he himself was of that opinion, and he was sure I should be so too. Such as it was, however, it was at my service; but he was urgent that the *Hints from Horace* should be immediately put in trim, which I promised to have done." Dallas, however, was not of the author's opinion; he wrote to Byron on the same evening: "You have written one of the most delightful poems I ever read. . . . I have been so fascinated with *Childe Harold* that I have not been able to lay it down." When the two cantos were published, Feb. 29th, 1812, the world showed itself to be of the same opinion as Dallas; the first edition was disposed of immediately, and Byron became the foremost literary celebrity of the day. These two cantos have not, however, maintained their position in critical estimation, and are greatly inferior to the two later. They owed, perhaps, some of their immediate popularity to their very mediocrity. Speaking of this portion of *Childe Harold*, Professor Nichol says: "It was just on the level of its age. Its flowing verse, defaced by rhythmical faults perceptible only to finer ears, its prevailing sentiment, occasional boldness relieved by pleasing platitudes, its half-affected rakishness, here and there elevated by a rush of morning air, and its frequent richness—not yet, as afterwards, splendour—of description, were all appreciated by the fashionable London of the Regency; while the comparatively mild satire, not keen enough to scarify, only gave a more piquant flavour to the whole. Byron's genius, yet in the green leaf, was not too far above the clever masses of pleasure-loving manhood by which it was surrounded."

On the title page of the edition published in 1812 stood the following motto :

“L’univers est une espèce de livre, dont on n’a lu que la première page quand on n’a vu que son pays. J’en ai feuilleté un assez grand nombre, que j’ai trouvé également mauvaises. Cet examen ne m’a point été infructueux. Je haïssais ma patrie. Toutes les impertinences des peuples divers, parmi lesquels j’ai vécu, m’ont réconcilié avec elle. Quand je n’aurais tiré d’autre bénéfice de mes voyages que celui-là, je n’en regretterais ni les frais ni les fatigues.”—*Le Cosmopolite*.

The following are the most important paragraphs of the preface :

“The following poem was written, for the most part, amidst the scenes which it attempts to describe. It was begun in Albania ; and the parts relative to Spain and Portugal were composed from the author’s observations in those countries. Thus much it may be necessary to state for the correctness of the descriptions. The scenes attempted to be sketched are in Spain, Portugal, Epirus, Acarnania, and Greece. There, for the present, the poem stops ; its reception will determine whether the author may venture to conduct his readers to the capital of the East, through Ionia and Phrygia : these two cantos are merely experimental.

“A fictitious character is introduced for the sake of giving some connexion to the piece ; which, however, makes no pretension to regularity. It has been suggested to me by friends, on whose opinions I set a high value, that in this fictitious character, ‘Childe Harold,’ I may incur the suspicion of having intended some real personage : this I beg leave, once for all, to disclaim ; Harold is the child of imagination, for the purpose I have stated. In some very trivial particulars, and those merely local, there might be grounds for such a notion ; but in the main points, I should hope, none whatever.

“It is almost superfluous to mention that the appellation ‘Childe,’ as ‘Childe Waters,’ ‘Childe Childers,’ etc., is used as more consonant with the old structure of versification which I have adopted. The ‘Good Night,’ in the beginning of the first canto, was suggested by ‘Lord Maxwell’s Good Night,’ in the *Border Minstrelsy*, edited by Mr. Scott.”

In a later edition appeared an “Addition to the Preface,” meeting certain objections of the critics to the character of Childe Harold himself. It closes with the following paragraph :

“I now leave ‘Childe Harold’ to live his day, such as he is ; it had been more agreeable, and certainly more easy, to have drawn an amiable character. It had been easy to varnish over his faults, to make him do more and express less ; but he never was intended as an example, further than to show that early perversion of mind and morals leads to satiety of past pleasures and disappointment in new ones, and that even the beauties of nature and the stimulus of travel (except ambition, the most powerful of all excitements) are lost on a soul so constituted, or rather misdirected. Had I proceeded with the poem, this character would have deepened as he drew to the close ; for the outline which I once meant to fill up for him was, with some exceptions, the sketch of a modern Timon, perhaps a poetical Zeluco.”

The Third Canto was begun in May, finished by the end of June, 1816, and published in the same year. On the title page stood the following motto :

“Afin que cette application vous forçât de penser à autre chose ; il n’y a en vérité de remède que celui-la et le temps.”—*Lettre du roi de Prusse, à d’Alembert* (Sept. 7, 1776).”

The Fourth Canto contains the record of a six weeks’ journey from Venice to Rome, in the spring of 1817. It was written for the most part after his return to Venice :

“On the 20th of July he had written to Murray, saying that it was ‘completed,’ and consisted of ‘126 stanzas.’ On the 4th of September he referred to it as having ‘144 stanzas,’ and again on the 17th as ‘one hundred and fifty stanzas.’ By the 15th of November it ‘has expanded to one hundred and sixty-seven stanzas,’ to which seventeen more were added before it was finally sent to Murray in January, 1818, and two in April as it was going through the press.” (Rolfe.)

In 1818 the Fourth Canto appeared with the following letter prefixed :

“TO JOHN HOBHOUSE, ESQ., A.M., F.R.S., &c., &c., &c.

“VENICE, January 2, 1818.

“MY DEAR HOBHOUSE,—After an interval of eight years between the composition of the first and last cantos of *Childe Harold*, the conclusion of the poem is about to be submitted to the public. In parting with so old a friend, it is not extraordinary that I should recur to one still older and better,—to one who has beheld the birth and death of the other, and to whom I am far more indebted for the social advantages of an enlightened friendship, than—though not ungrateful—I can, or could be, to *Childe Harold*, for any public favour reflected through the poem on the poet—to one whom I have known long and accompanied far, whom I have found wakeful over my sickness and kind in my sorrow, glad in my prosperity and firm in my adversity, true in counsel and trusty in peril,—to a friend often tried and never found wanting,—to yourself.

“In so doing, I recur from fiction to truth ; and in dedicating to you in its complete, or at least concluded state, a poetical work which is the longest, the most thoughtful and comprehensive of my compositions, I wish to do honour to myself by the record of many years’ intimacy with a man of learning, of talent, of steadiness, and of honour. It is not for minds like ours to give or to receive flattery ; yet the praises of sincerity have ever been permitted to the voice of friendship ; and it is not for you, nor even for others, but to relieve a heart which has not elsewhere, or lately, been so much accustomed to the encounter of good-will as to withstand the shock firmly, that I thus attempt to commemorate your good qualities, or rather the advantages which I have derived from their exertion. Even the recurrence of the date of this letter, the anni-

versary of the most unfortunate day* of my past existence, but which cannot poison my future while I retain the resource of your friendship, and of my own faculties, will henceforth have a more agreeable recollection for both, inasmuch as it will remind us of this my attempt to thank you for an indefatigable regard, such as few men have experienced, and no one could experience without thinking better of his species and of himself.

“It has been our fortune to traverse together, at various periods, the countries of chivalry, history, and fable,—Spain, Greece, Asia Minor, and Italy; and what Athens and Constantinople were to us a few years ago, Venice and Rome have been more recently. The poem also, or the pilgrim, or both, have accompanied me from first to last; and perhaps it may be a pardonable vanity which induces me to reflect with complacency on a composition which in some degree connects me with the spot where it was produced, and the objects it would fain describe; and however unworthy it may be deemed of those magical and memorable abodes, however short it may fall of our distant conceptions and immediate impressions, yet as a mark of respect for what is venerable, and of feeling for what is glorious, it has been to me a source of pleasure in the production, and I part with it with a kind of regret, which I hardly suspected that events could have left me for imaginary objects.

“With regard to the conduct of the last canto, there will be found less of the pilgrim than in any of the preceding, and that little slightly, if at all, separated from the author speaking in his own person. The fact is, that I had become weary of drawing a line which every one seemed determined not to perceive: like the Chinese in Goldsmith’s *Citizen of the World*, whom nobody would believe to be a Chinese, it was in vain that I asserted, and imagined that I had drawn, a distinction between the author and the pilgrim; and the very anxiety to preserve this difference, and disappointment at finding it unavailing, so far crushed my efforts in the composition that I determined to abandon it altogether—and have done so. The opinions which have been, or may be, formed on that subject are now a matter of indifference; the work is to depend on itself, and not on the writer; and the author, who has no resources in his own mind beyond the reputation, transient or permanent, which is to arise from his literary efforts, deserves the fate of authors.

“In the course of the following canto it was my intention, either in the text or in the notes, to have touched upon the present state of Italian literature, and perhaps of manners. But the text, within the limits I proposed, I soon found hardly sufficient for the labyrinth of external objects, and the consequent reflections; and for the whole of the notes, excepting a few of the shortest, I am indebted to yourself, and these were necessarily limited to the elucidation of the text.

“It is also a delicate, and no very grateful task, to dissert upon the literature and manners of a nation so dissimilar; and requires an attention and impartiality which would induce us—though perhaps no inattentive observers, nor ignorant of the language or customs of the people amongst whom we have recently abode—to distrust, or at least defer our

* Byron refers to his marriage.

judgment, and more narrowly examine our information. The state of literary, as well as political party, appears to run, or to *have* run, so high that for a stranger to steer impartially between them is next to impossible. It may be enough, then, at least for my purpose, to quote from their own beautiful language: 'Mi pare che in un paese tutto poetico, che vanta la lingua la più nobile ed insieme la più dolce, tutte tutte le vie diverse si possono tentare e che sinche la patria di Alfieri e di Monti non ha perduto l'antico valore, in tutte essa dovrebbe essere la prima.' Italy has great names still—Canova, Monti, Ugo Foscolo, Pindemonte, Visconti, Morelli, Cicognara, Albrizzi, Mezzophanti, Mai, Mustoxidi, Algiietti, and Vacca, will secure to the present generation an honourable place in most of the departments of Art, Science, and Belles Lettres; and in some the very highest: Europe—the World—has but one Canova.

"It has been somewhere said by Alfieri that 'La pianta uomo nasce più robusta in Italia che in qualunque altra terra, e che gli stessi atroci delitti che vi si commettono ne sono una prova.' Without subscribing to the latter part of his proposition, a dangerous doctrine, the truth of which may be disputed on better grounds, namely, that the Italians are in no respect more ferocious than their neighbours,—that man must be wilfully blind, or ignorantly heedless, who is not struck with the extraordinary capacity of this people, or, if such a word be admissible, their *capabilities*, the facility of their acquisitions, the rapidity of their conceptions, the fire of their genius, their sense of beauty, and, amidst all the disadvantages of repeated revolutions, the desolation of battles, and the despair of ages, their still unquenched 'longing after immortality,'—the immortality of independence. And when we ourselves, in riding round the walls of Rome, heard the simple lament of the labourers' chorus, 'Roma! Roma! Roma! Roma non è più come era prima,' it was difficult not to contrast this melancholy dirge with the bacchanal roar of the songs of exultation still yelled from the London taverns over the carnage of Mont St. Jean, and the betrayal of Genoa, of Italy, of France, and of the world, by men whose conduct you yourself have exposed in a work worthy of the better days of our history. For me,—

"Non movero mai corda
Ove la turba di sue ciance assorda."

"What Italy has gained by the late transfer of nations, it were useless for Englishmen to inquire, till it becomes ascertained that England has acquired something more than a permanent army and a suspended Habeas Corpus; it is enough for them to look at home. For what they have done abroad, and especially in the South, 'Verily they *will have* their reward,' and at no very distant period.

"Wishing you, my dear Hobhouse, a safe and agreeable return to that country whose real welfare can be dearer to none than to yourself, I dedicate to you this poem in its completed state; and repeat once more how truly I am ever

"Your obliged and affectionate friend,
"BYRON."

The name "Childe Harold" is, as far as the Fourth Canto is concerned, a misnomer; the Childe only appears once (l. 1468), and then merely to be dismissed. It is the author himself who speaks here, without the intervention of any fictitious personage. The canto is simply a description of various objects which strike the poet on his tour through Italy, and of the feelings and reflections aroused by them. At times, these feelings and reflections carry him far from the object which first excited them, and the writer forgets external things in his own memories and emotions. There is, strictly speaking, no plot or development; sometimes the poet passes from one theme to another without any link of transition, sometimes the link is a trivial and artificial one. Yet such is the variety of subject, so happily are expressions of inner feeling mingled with descriptions of outer objects, that the reader is carried easily along, and scarcely notes the want of story or plan. Besides, the canto possesses a unity of tone and interest imparted by the personality of the narrator. That the canto is to some extent an artistic whole is easily seen by the loss in effectiveness of individual passages when torn from their context, as they are, for example, in Arnold's *Selections*. The description of the Coliseum, the Grotto of Egeria, of Terni, the address to Rome (ll. 694-711), to Italy (ll. 370-423), and to the Ocean, etc., do not have the power over us there which they possess when read in their proper connection.

For a poem of the character of *Childe Harold*, no better theme than Italy could be found. The subjects suggested by an Italian journey are of unequalled variety, and of universal interest:—scenes of historic events, and of natural beauty, works of art, ruins imposing both in their material aspect and by their associations, memorials of great writers, of artists, of warriors, and of statesmen. Italy's history is so momentous for the whole western world, and stretches through such vast periods, as to be suggestive of a thousand thoughts on the destiny and character of man. Moreover, the condition of country—the contrast between her past and her present—lends itself to a line of feeling and thought very congenial to the melancholy tone of the writer. There are in the poem a great number of passages of striking merit—indeed they are in the majority; these are not, indeed, proof against minute criticism, but, taken as a whole, give a strong general impression of vigour and excellence. Both in their merits and defects they serve to exemplify the general characteristics of the writer's genius.

The form of verse adopted is the Spenserian stanza, so called from its

inventor, Spenser, who employed it in the *Faery Queen*. This is a stanza of eight pentameter lines followed by an Alexandrine (*i.e.*, a line of six feet, or stresses). The pentameter lines are arranged in two quatrains, each quatrain composed of lines rhyming alternately; the last line of the first quatrain also rhymes with the first line of the second quatrain. The Alexandrine also rhymes with the last line of the preceding quatrain. The rhyme scheme may therefore be represented as *a b a b b c b c c*. (For a characterization of this stanza, and examples of its use by various poets, see Corson's *Primer of English Verse*.)

The Spenserian is the longest and most elaborate stanza employed in English for very extensive poems. Its long line, with its cadence markedly different from that of the other line, serves to indicate clearly the end of the stanza. Its length adapts it particularly to descriptive and pictorial poetry, where a considerable number of details have to be combined to form a single picture. This framing of a complete picture in a single stanza is a favourite device with Spenser. On account of its length, and the consequently slow movement of the verse, the stanza is ill suited to rapid narrative, to telling an interesting story. To that purpose, short verse units, such as the couplet, or the single line of blank verse, are much better adapted. Spenser inclines to intensify, by various devices, the slow movement natural to the stanza; a good example of its languor is to be found in the introductory portion of Tennyson's *Lotos Eaters*; but Byron is characteristically marked among the users of this form of verse, by the vigour and force which he imparts to it. Notwithstanding, however, that *Childe Harold* is rendered animated through force of feeling, the poem is fundamentally meditative and descriptive, and hence slow in its progress; Byron's selection of his form of verse is therefore very judicious. Mr. Tozer, speaking of the Spenserian stanza, says: "From being longer and more complex than the couplet, it can express an idea or group of ideas more fully, and illustrate it more elaborately, and develop a description more completely; while, on the other hand, the recurrence of a marked pause at definite intervals imparts a unity to each successive step in the progress of the poem, and at the same time relieves the strain on the attention which is unavoidable in continuous verse. The stanza was especially well suited for Byron's purpose in *Childe Harold*, because the subject is constantly shifting, and requires that there should be continuity, but of the least stringent kind. The stanzas are not so much links of a chain as beads on a string."

Normally, of course, the close of each line in the stanza will corres-

pond to a pause, greater or less, in the sense; and the close of the stanza itself to a marked break in the sense. But Byron is characteristically free in his handling of the form (more particularly, as Mr. Tozer points out, in the 3rd and 4th cantos as compared with the 1st and 2nd) and often disregards the regular usage,—sometimes with excellent effect. Sometimes, however, he carries his laxity so far as to end a line with a preposition or some other word in the closest connection with what follows, and with scarcely any emphasis of its own (*i.e.*, Weak Ending): *e. g.*, ll. 452, 775, 1126. This is decidedly displeasing; as is also, generally, the running of one stanza into another without sense pause: *e. g.*, ll. 630, 666, 675.

Variety is given to the cadence of a Spenserian stanza especially (1st) by the varied adjustment of pauses,—particularly of the strong pause near the middle of the stanza, at the end of the 4th line, or middle or end of the 5th line, etc.; and (2nd) by the character of the closing *Alexandrine*,—its relation to what precedes, and the position of the caesural pause within that line itself. “In particular, a strong stop at the end of the fifth line has a marked effect in throwing that line into immediate connection with the four preceding ones, which alternate in their rhymes, so that it appears to clench them. Accordingly, it is in this part of the stanza that many of the finest lines in the poem occur.” (Tozer.) Byron also uses double rhymes freely.

The full title of the poem is *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage: a Romaunt*. The use of the word “childe” for knight, after the fashion of the ancient ballads, and the words “A Romaunt” indicate the influence of romantic literature which had been made fashionable by Scott. In the first two cantos there is some attempt to throw an antique air over the poem by the use of archaic expressions; but the modern spirit was too strong for Byron, and before he had reached Canto IV. any attempt to make a “romaunt” of the poem had been abandoned.

1. **Bridge of Sighs.** A covered bridge of stone, high above the canal, connecting the Ducal Palace and the State Prison.

8. **winged Lion's marble piles.** In mediæval art the lion is the emblem of St. Mark; as he was the patron saint of Venice, the lion was adopted as the emblem of Venice also.

9. **her hundred isles.** Venice is actually built on 117 islands.

10. **a sea Cybele.** Cybele was the goddess of the earth and was usually represented with a turreted crown. Byron quotes the Italian historian Sabellicus, who “has made use of the above image which

would not be poetical were it not true: 'Quo fit ut qui superne urbem contempletur turritam telluris imaginem medio Oceano figuratam se putet inspicere.'” Cybele is not usually pronounced as here, but Cybele.

14-18. Venice was the great centre for traffic between Europe and the East until the 16th century, when the discovery of the passage to India round the Cape of Good Hope, and of America, changed the course of trade.

19-20. “I cannot forbear mentioning a custom in Venice, which they tell me is particular to the common people of this country, of singing stanzas out of Tasso. They are set to a pretty, solemn tune, and when one begins in any part of the poet, it is odds but he will be answered by somebody else that overhears him.” (Addison, 1700.) This practice ceased at the close of the 18th century when Venice lost its independence.

Tasso, see note on l. 316.

24. Nature doth not die. The natural beauty of Venice does not pass away.

27. masque. Here simply *a scene of gaiety*. The poet has in his mind the carnival celebrations of the Italian cities.

33-34. Rialto. The bridge which with a single arch spans the Grand Canal, referred to in the *Merchant of Venice*.

Shylock, etc. Venice casts a spell over us, not merely by her actual history, but because she is the scene of three great imaginative works, *The Merchant of Venice*, *Othello the Moor of Venice*, and Otway's (1651-1685), *Venice Preserved*, of which Pierre is the hero. Otway's play is reckoned one of the greatest tragedies in the English language since the great Elizabethan period.

35. The keystones of the arch. The Rialto, and all actual Venice may perish; but the glory which she possesses for our imagination is kept sure by the immortality of these three great dramas.

37-90. In these stanzas the poet, as is his wont, turns from his theme to give vent to his personal feelings.

40-45. In these lines the characteristic attitude of Byron appears. Life is a disappointment, we come to hate the real; the early faith and hope of the heart is destroyed. Under these circumstances we turn from the actual world to the world of literature and of the imagination,

45. **void.** The rhyme is unpleasingly defective.

46-47. Cf. the lines from *Don Juan* :

In youth I wrote because my mind was full,
And now because I find it growing dull.

50. **Yet there are things, etc.** There are some experiences of actual life which for a time at least seem to surpass the ideals of the imagination. Byron is referring more especially to early love and early friendship.

57. **are now but so.** Are now only dreams.

58. **replace them.** Mr. Tozer paraphrases "call them up before the mind's eye," but the meaning seems rather "I could now enjoy similar experiences, but reason teaches me that these likewise would prove illusory."

66. **is itself.** Is sufficient to itself.

75. **it.** My native land.

77. **line.** Lineage.

82. **temple.** Temple of fame.

85-86. "The answer of the mother of Brasidas, the Lacedaemonian general, to the strangers who praised the memory of her son." (Byron.)

91. Annually, on Ascension Day, the Doge used to perform the ceremony of wedding the Adriatic by throwing a ring into the sea from the state-galley Bucentaur, in token of the maritime supremacy of the Republic ; cf. Wordsworth's sonnet *On the Extinction of the Venetian Republic*.

95. See on l. 8. "The lion is on the top of a lofty column overlooking the Piazza di San Marco. In this *proud place* the Emperor Frederic Barbarossa (called the *Suabian* below, because he was of the house of Suabia) made submission to Pope Alexander III. in 1177." (Rolfe.)

100. Austria held Venice from 1797-1866, with the exception of some ten years in the early part of the century. The following lines were especially true at a time when Napoleon's successful career was so recent.

106. **lauwine.** The German word for *avalanche*.

107-108. Byron says in his note : "The reader will recollect the exclamation of the Highlander,

‘Oh, for one hour of Dundee.’”

"The Venetian attack on Constantinople (Byzantium) in 1204, when the city was captured by the Crusaders in the Fourth Crusade, was headed by the Doge, Henry Dandolo, who was more than 80 years of age, and blind." (Tozer.)

109. This 'glorious team of bronze horses,' as Goethe calls them, stand on the portal of the famous cathedral of St. Mark. They were brought by Dandolo from Constantinople, whither they had been carried by Constantine from one of the triumphal arches of Rome.

111. In 1379 the Venetians, after being defeated by the Paduans and the Genoese, sent an embassy offering to submit to any terms provided their independence was preserved. Peter Doria, the Genoese commander made answer: "Ye shall have no peace from the Signor of Padua, nor from the Commune of Genoa, until we have first put a rein upon those unbridled horses of yours, which are upon the porch of your evangelist, St. Mark."

113. "The foundation of Venice dates from the invasion of Italy by the Huns under Attila, A.D. 452, when many of the inhabitants of the neighbouring districts took refuge in the islands in the lagoons." (Tozer.)

118. **Tyre.** On the sea coast of Phoenicia, one of the greatest commercial cities of the ancient world.

119. **by-word.** Here, not used in its ordinary sense of *proverbial expression*, but as a synonym for nick-name. *Pantaloön* is, among the Italians, a common nick-name for Venetian; and Byron says that this name of ridicule came from their victories,—deriving it from *Piantaleone* = planter, as being planters of their standard of the Lion of St. Mark. The fact, however, is that St. Pantaleone was a favourite saint in the city, and so Pantaleone came to be a favourite baptismal name in Venice, and hence to be an appellation of Venetians in general.

123. Cf. Wordsworth's sonnet:

Once did she hold the gorgeous East in fee,
And was the safeguard of the West.

124. **Troy's rival, Candia.** A *rival*, inasmuch as Candia sustained a long and famous siege. The town, which is in Crete, was defended by the Venetians against the Turks from 1648-1669, when the Venetians surrendered.

125. **Lepanto's fight.** The great battle (1571) at the entrance to the Gulf of Lepanto, in which the naval ascendancy of the Turks in the Mediterranean was destroyed by the combined fleets of Venice, the Pope, Spain, and Genoa.

127. **Statues of glass.** This is a comparison—*like statues of glass.*

129. **the vast and sumptuous pile.** The Ducal Palace.

132. **the stranger.** The Austrian.

133. **foreign aspects.** Austrian soldiers and officials.

136-144. Plutarch in his *Life of Nicias* tells how, after the final defeat of the Athenian expedition against Syracuse in B.C. 413, some of the captives obtained their freedom by reciting passages from the tragedies of Euripides. Milton refers to a similar incident in one of his sonnets :

The repeated air
Of sad Electra's poet had the power
To save the Athenian walls from ruin bare.

142. **idle scimitar, etc.** The word "scimitar" is evidently due to the necessities of rhyme ; scimitars were not among the weapons of the Greeks. The scimitars which had been hanging unemployed from the belt is drawn to sever the captive's bonds.

144. **his strains** is of course not governed by "for" but by "thank."

147-148. See note on l. 19.

156. **water-columns.** The column of a water-spout.

158. The reference is to works by these writers, the plots of which are laid in Venice, viz.: the once famous *Mysteries of Udolpho*, a romantic novel by Mrs. Radcliffe (1764-1823) ; *Der Geisterseher*, a story by Schiller (1759-1805) ; and the dramas by Shakespeare and Otway mentioned in the note on ll. 33-34.

163. The ending of this line with the preposition "of" is very objectionable from the metrical point of view.

170. Here again the poet turns from his theme, and presents himself in his favourite guise, a blighted and melancholy, but strong and proud, sufferer.

172. **tannen.** Byron in his note explains that this "is the plural of *tanne*, a species of fir peculiar to the Alps." But *tanne* is, in fact, simply the German word for *fir*.

180. **the mind may grow, etc.** In the same way the mind may be developed by desolation, and the shocks of suffering.

182. **life and sufferance.** This apparently means *a life of suffering*, being an example of what the rhetoricians call *hendiadys*.

192. There are three classes ; some overcome their sufferings and hopefully enter upon the same sort of experiences again, in the expectation that now they will yield happiness ; some never forget their anguish, and are destroyed by, and with it ; some seek distraction from their griefs in pursuits lofty or ignoble, according to their disposition.

206-207. Some trifle, it may be, rouses the train of painful associations in the memory, and the old pang is felt again.

225-226. Such overflow from one stanza to another may occasionally be admissible, or even advantageous, but in this case, when the close is at the first line of the 2nd stanza, it is decidedly unpleasing, and an example of Byron's careless workmanship.

230. *in thy desert.* In thy desolate places.

235. "The description of sunset which follows serves as a sort of interlude between the subject of Venice and that of the other Italian cities. The point of view is the mainland opposite Venice, where the river Brenta enters the sea." (Tozer.)

238. *blue Friuli's mountains.* The epithet "blue" belongs to mountains. "By 'Friuli's' mountains are meant the Julian Alps, which form an arc from behind Trieste to the neighbourhood of Verona ; and the term must be taken in its widest acceptance, for the mountains intended are evidently those to the west of Venice, while Friuli itself (the ancient Forum Julii) is to the north-east of that city. The same chain, or higher summits beyond, are called in l. 247, 'the far Rhaetian hill,' *i.e.*, the Tyrol." (Tozer.)

243. "The above description may seem fantastical or exaggerated to those who have never seen an Oriental or an Italian sky, yet it is but a literal and hardly sufficient delineation of an August evening (the eighteenth) as contemplated in one of many rides along the Brenta, near La Mira." (Byron.)

262. *There is a tomb in Arqua, etc.* Arqua del Monte is a village about 12 miles from Padua, in the Euganean hills. Here Petrarch passed his later years, and here his body lies in a sarcophagus of red marble raised upon four pillars. Francesco Petrarca (1304-1374) is one of the earliest of the great modern lyric poets. He is particularly known by his sonnets inspired by his unrequited passion for a lady named Laura. Reference is also made in this stanza to the ode in which he urges the Italian princes to compose their dissensions and to unite in excluding the mercenary barbarians from Italy ; and to his services in the establishment of the literary language of modern Italy.

269-270. The laurel is the emblem of glory, and Petrarch frequently plays upon the similarity between this word and the name of his lady.

281. **complexion.** *Character*; cf. *Merch. of Venice*, iii., 1: "It is the complexion of them all to leave the dam."

293. **Idlesse.** An archaic form; in the first two cantos such forms are somewhat frequently used.

298. "The struggle is to the full as likely to be with demons as with our better thoughts. Satan chose the wilderness for the temptation of our Saviour. And one unsullied John Locke preferred the presence of a child to complete solitude." (Byron's note.)

307. **Ferrara.** Situated in the delta of the Po.

310. **the antique brood, etc.** The house of Este, long the hereditary rulers of Ferrara.

314-315. **those who wore, etc.** Tasso and Ariosto.

Dante. See note on l. 344.

316, ff. Torquato Tasso (1544-1595), Italian poet, author of the famous epic *La Gerusalemme Liberata*, on the subject of Godfrey de Bouillon and the crusaders. His patron was Alfonso II., Duke of Ferrara, with whose sister Leonora, it is supposed, on very doubtful grounds, that he fell in love. After the publication of his great epic, his mind became affected by religious melancholy. He was confined by order of the Duke in a mad-house for seven years.

339. **the Cruscan quire.** The Accademia della Crusca, established in Florence, 1582, for the purpose of purifying the Italian language. Its judgment on Tasso's *Jerusalem* was unfavourable.

340. **Boileau** (1636-1711), French poet and critic. Byron in his note on this passage says: "Perhaps the couplet in which Boileau depreciates Tasso may serve as well as any other specimen to justify the opinion given of the harmony of French verse:—

A Malherte, à Racau, préfère Théophile
Et le clinquant du Tasse à tout l'or de Virgile.—Sat. ix."

354, ff. **The bards of Hell, etc.** The reference is to *Dante* (1265-1321), born in Florence (hence "Tuscan"), the first of the great modern poets (hence "father"), author of the *Divine Comedy*, in which he describes Hell, Purgatory, and Heaven; and to *Ariosto* (1474-1533), Italian poet, author of the *Orlando*; he is called the "Bard of Chivalry"

and "the Southern Scott," for the reasons indicated in l. 360. Like Tasso, he was connected with Ferrara.

361, ff. "Before the remains of Ariosto were removed from the Benedictine church to the library of Ferrara, his bust, which surmounted the tomb, was struck by lightning and a crown of iron laurels melted away." (Byron's note.)

368. **the lightning sanctifies.** A place struck by lightning was held sacred by the Romans. "Bodies scattered and persons struck dead were thought to be incorruptible; and a stroke not fatal conferred perpetual dignity on the man so distinguished by heaven." (Byron's note.)

370-387. Byron tells us in his note that these two stanzas "are, with the exception of a line or two, a translation of the famous sonnet of Filicaja" (Florentine poet who lived at the close of the 17th century).

384. **from the Po** is to be construed with "quaff," not with "spoilers."

389. **The Roman friend, etc.** "The celebrated letter of Servius Sulpicius to Cicero, on the death of his daughter, describes as it then was, and now is, a path which I have often traced in Greece, both by sea and land, in different journeys and voyages. 'On my return from Asia, as I was sailing from Aegina towards Megara, I began to contemplate the prospect of the countries around me; Aegina was behind, Megara before me; Piraeus on the right, Corinth on the left: all which towns, once famous and flourishing, now lie overturned and buried in their ruins. Upon this sight, I could not but think presently within myself, Alas! how do we poor mortals fret and vex ourselves if any of our friends happen to die or be killed, whose life is yet so short, when the carcasses of so many noble cities lie here exposed before me in one view.'" (Byron's note.) The original epistle may be found included in Cicero's *Epist. ad Fam.*, 4, 5, 4.

409-410. **in desolation.** *I.e.*, in *their* desolation.

all that, etc. *All* the then existing desolation still exists.

413. Byron, in his note, quotes Poggio's exclamation on looking upon the ruins of Rome: "Ut nunc omni decore nudata prostrata jacet, instar gigantei cadaveris corrupti atque undique exese."

423. **barbarian.** Byron uses the word here, not in the usual modern sense, but as the Romans used it, to designate all peoples except themselves and the Greeks. At this particular period the "barbarians" who

ruled in Italy were mainly Austrians ; the kingdom of Naples was also in the hands of foreign Bourbon rulers.

424-425. Byron now passes to Florence on the Arno, the chief city of Tuscany, the ancient Etruria. It merits the name of Athens by its importance among the cities of Italy in art and literature.

433. **There, too, the Goddess, etc.** The Venus de' Medici in the Uffizi Gallery, an ancient statue discovered in Rome in the 16th century, and considered one of the most beautiful examples of the sculptor's art.

In 1817 Lord Byron visited Florence on his way to Rome. "I remained," he says, "*but a day* ; however, I went to the two galleries, from which one returns *drunk with beauty*. The Venus is more for admiration than love."

435. **ambrosial.** Ambrosia was the Greek name for the good of the gods, the word originally meaning *immortal*. The adjective is applied in English poetry in a vague fashion to what delights the senses. Here the appropriateness of the word is indicated by the phrase "which [as Ambrosia did] instils part of its immortality".

448. **The paltry jargon, etc.** The technical cant of dealers in statuary.

450. **Dardan Shepherd.** Paris (Dardan=Trojan), who was chosen as arbiter when Juno, Minerva, and Venus each claimed the golden apple inscribed 'for the most beautiful'. Paris awarded the prize to Venus. (See Tennyson's *Oenone*.)

452. **Anchorises** beloved of Venus, and, by her, father of Aeneas.

454. **Lord of War.** Mars, the God of War, wedded to Venus.

457. In his note Byron quotes Ovid *Amores*, ii. :

Atque oculos pascat uterque suos.

470. **his ape.** The man who apes the artist.

478. "The church of Santa Croce contains much illustrious nothing. The tombs of Machiavelli, Michael Angelo, Galileo, and Alfieri, make it the Westminster Abbey of Italy. I did not admire any of these tombs beyond their contents." (From a letter of Byron, 1817.)

484. **Michael Angelo** (1475-1564), sculptor, painter, architect, and poet.

Alfieri (1749-1803), dramatist, and advocate of Italian liberty.

485. **Galileo** (1564-1642), astronomer, inventor of the telescope ; his advocacy of the theory that the sun moves around the earth resulted in his trial and imprisonment.

486. **Machiavelli** (1469-1527), Florentine, diplomatist, and writer, eminent especially for his works on politics and government.

492-495. Even in her decay Italy produces great geniuses like Canova (1757-1822), the well known sculptor ; see the sixth paragraph of Byron's dedicatory epistle, p. 211.

496. **the all Etruscan three.** "All" is not adverbial to "Etruscan," but belongs to "three."

497. **Dante and Petrarch.** See notes on l. 315 and l. 262.

498. **The Bard of Prose.** Boccaccio (1313-1375), one of the greatest masters of prose style. His chief work is the *Decameron*, a collection of 100 stories put into the mouths of seven ladies and three gentlemen. who are thus supposed to while away ten days at a country villa.

505. Dante died in exile and was buried at Ravenna ; see line 527.

506. Scipio Africanus, the Elder, the conqueror of Carthage, spent his last years in exile on account of the machinations of his enemies. He died about 183 B.C., and is said to have been buried at Liternum, on the coast of Campania, with the inscription upon his tomb: "Ingrata patria, cineres meos non habebis."

upbraiding refers to the clamor of the waves.

510-511. On Easter Sunday, 1341, at Rome, Petrarch was crowned poet-laureate amidst the acclamations of a vast multitude.

512-513. Petrarch's father was exiled from Florence at the same time as Dante ; Petrarch was born in Arezzo and spent a considerable part of his life at Avignon, but was not a resident of Florence. In 1630 his tomb was broken open and some bones carried off.

514-522. "Boccaccio was buried in the church of St. Michael and St. James, at Certaldo, a small town in the Valdelsa, which was by some supposed the place of his birth. There he passed the latter part of his life in a course of laborious study, which shortened his existence ; and there might his ashes have been secure, if not of honour, at least of repose. But the "hyena bigots" of Certaldo tore up the tombstone of Boccaccio, and ejected it from the holy precincts of St. Michael and St.

James. The occasion, and, it may be hoped, the excuse, of this ejection was the making of a new floor for the church ; but the fact is the tombstone was taken up and thrown aside at the bottom of the building, Ignorance may share the sin with bigotry." (Byron's note.)

525. "The reference is to the funeral of Junia, the wife of Cassius, and sister of Brutus, A.D. 22, during the reign of Tiberius, on which occasion the busts of those two distinguished men were not allowed to be carried in the procession on account of their having taken part in the murder of Caesar. On this Tacitus remarks (*Ann.* 3, 76,)—‘*Praefulgabant Cassius atque Brutus, eo ipso quod effigies eorum non visebantur.*’ There is, however, no reason for thinking that Junia was of the family of the Caesars, as Byron implies." (Tozer's note.)

527-528. Ravenna, formerly on the Adriatic coast, now six miles inland. "The strength and importance of Ravenna was shown at the period of the barbarian invasions, when the Roman emperors of the West used to take refuge there, instead of remaining in Rome." (Tozer's note.)

529. The immortal exile. Dante.

Arqua. See on l. 262.

532-535. The reference is to the burial chapel of the Medici in connection with the church of San Lorenzo in Florence. *Pyramid* is used here loosely for an elaborate structure in memory of the dead ; the chapel is, in fact, octagonal in form and covered by a dome. It is gorgeously decorated with marbles and mosaics. Byron writes to Murray : "I also went to the Medici chapel,—fine frippery in great slabs of various expensive stones, to commemorate fifty rotten and forgotten carcasses."

merchant-dukes. The great family of the Medici, long the ruling house of Florence, and famous for their patronage of literature and art, rose into notice originally through wealth obtained in commerce.

542-544. Florence contains one of the greatest collections of sculpture and paintings in the world, especially in the Uffizi and Pitti palaces, which are connected by a passage-way crossing one of the bridges of the Arno. *Dome* is used very vaguely (see note, l. 159 of *The Traveller*), perhaps here in the sense of *dwelling-place*, and referring to the whole city of Florence.

548-549. *it. My spirit.* These are two very poor lines, disagreeable in sound, and awkward and obscure in structure. It is questionable if Byron clearly distinguished in his own mind what he meant by "my spirit" and "the weapon which it wields." It is likely they both

refer to one and the same thing. "Weapon," we may interpret as his poetic power, which is not so well suited for dealing with art as with nature. Byron writes to Murray: "I never yet saw the picture or the statue which came a league within my conception or expectation; but I have seen many mountains and seas and rivers and views, and two or three women, who were far beyond it."

551-558. **Thrasimene's lake.** The poet is now on his way from Florence to Rome, and arrives at the ancient *Lacus Trasimenus*, where in B.C. 217 the Romans, under Flaminius, unguardedly entered a pass between the mountains and the lake. The surrounding heights and the rear were occupied by the Carthaginians under Hannibal; the Romans fought desperately for three hours, but were defeated with great slaughter.

563. Livy narrates this incident (22, 5): *Tantusque fuit ardor armorum, adeo intentus pugnae animus, ut eum motum terrae, qui multarum urbium Italiae magnas partes prostravit, avertitque cursu rapidos amnes, mare fluminibus invexit, montes lapsu ingenti proruit, nemo pugnantium senserit.*

586. **Clitumnus.** A river of Southern Umbria, falling into the *Tinia*, which in turn is a tributary of the Tiber.

590. "In my way to Terni I saw the river Clitumnus, celebrated by so many of the poets for a particular quality in its waters of making cattle white that drink of it. The inhabitants of that country have still the same opinion of it, as I found upon inquiry, and have a great many oxen of a whitish colour to confirm them in it." (Addison.) Cf. Virgil, *Georg.* ii., 146, and Macaulay, *Horatius*:

Unwatched along Clitumnus
Grazes the milk-white steer.

595. Near the village of Le Vene, on the Clitumnus, is "a small ancient Temple usually regarded as that of [the god] *Clitumnus* mentioned by Pliny (*Epist.* 8, 8), but probably not earlier than Constantine the Great." (Baedeker.)

602. **chance.** Perchance. Cf. Gray, *Elegy*: "If, chance, by lonely contemplation led."

613. The poet suddenly passes on to a description of the falls on the river Velino, near Terni. "The celebrated falls of the Velino (which here empties itself into the Nera), called the *Cascade delle Marmore*, are

about 650 ft. in height, and have few rivals in Europe in beauty of situation and volume of water. The rivulet is precipitated from the height in three leaps of about 65, 330, and 190 ft. respectively, the water falling perpendicularly at some places, and at others dashing furiously over the rocks." (Baedeker.)

620. **Phlegethon.** "Derived from *φλέγεω*, 'the burning, boiling river of Hell.'" (Tozer.)

642. **Iris.** Rainbow.

649-650. The Appennines are an off-shoot of the Alps.

653. **lauwine.** See on l. 106 ; improperly used here as a plural.

654-655. The Jungfrau (*i.e.* Virgin) is one of the highest peaks of the Bernese Alps. In Byron's time it had not been scaled, hence its name.

657-658. **Th' Acroceraunian mountains** (called in modern times the mountains of Khimara, or Chimari, from a town at their base) are in Epirus. They were famous for their frequent thunderstorms, hence the name (*κεραῖνος*, a thunderbolt). Byron refers to them in the 51st stanza of Canto II.

659. **Parnassus**, in Greece, was one of the chief haunts of Apollo and the muses. "Upon Parnassus," says Byron in his diary, "going to the fountain of Delphi in 1809, I saw a flight of twelve eagles, . . . and I seized the omen. On the day before I composed the lines to Parnassus [*Childe Harold*, Canto I., 1], and, on beholding the birds, had a hope that Apollo had accepted my homage."

662. **Ida.** Famous mountain in the neighbourhood of Troy.

With a Trojan's eye is interpreted as meaning "from the same point of view as the Trojans, viz., from the plain of Troy.

663. **Athos.** A mountainous peninsula which projects from the ancient Chalcidice (mod. Salonica) into the Aegean (mentioned by Byron in st. xxvii. of Canto II.). *Olympus*, a range of mountains in Northern Greece (separated the ancient Macedonia from Thessaly); *Aetna*, volcanic mountain in Sicily; *Atlas*, in north-west of Africa.

665. **Soracte.** Now *San Oreste*, a mountain to the north of Rome, and a conspicuous object from that city.

666-669. **Not now in snow, etc.** As there is no snow on Soracte when the poet is looking at it, we would not think of snow were it not for the passage of the "lyric Roman," Horace (*Od.* i., 9): "Vides ut alta stet nive candidum Soracte." The antecedent of "which" is "snow."

672. **with Latian echoes.** Quotations from Latin literature, such as the one mentioned above, or Virgil's references to Soracte, *Aen.* vi., 696, and xi., 785

673-684. **to conquer, etc.** The object of "conquer" is apparently "lesson," but the poet is, probably, expressing himself inaccurately, and may mean "to conquer *the abhorrence*." The whole passage is an example of Byron's occasional slovenliness. So "inveteracy" cannot properly be said to be "wrought by impatience"; Byron means by "inveteracy," *inveterate dislike*. Again, "with" is scarcely the right word, the meaning is *on account of*. Byron in a note on this passage says: "I wish to express that we become tired of the task before we can comprehend the beauty; that we learn by rote before we can get by heart; that the freshness is worn away, and the future pleasure and advantage deadened and destroyed, by the didactic anticipation, at an age when we can neither feel nor understand the power of compositions which it requires an acquaintance with life, as well as Latin and Greek, to relish or to reason upon."

690. **nor Bard prescribe his art.** The reference is to Horace's *Ars Poetica*, where the rules of poetic art are laid down.

604-702. Compare the passage quoted in note on l. 389.

703. **Niobe.** According to the Greek myth, Niobe, proud of the number of her children, boasted herself superior to Latona, who had only two. These two children, Apollo and Diana, indignant at Niobe's presumption, slew all her children with their arrows. Byron had doubtless in mind the mournful and queenly figure of Niobe in the famous group at Florence, though he does not follow it in the details of his description.

707. **The Scipios' tomb.** The tomb of this patrician family, famous in the annals of Rome, was discovered on the Appian way in 1780, and the bones found in it soon carried off.

712. Rome was captured by the Goths under Alaric A.D. 410, and under Totila, A.D. 546. The Christians contributed to the defacement of ancient Rome by employing the ruins to furnish materials for modern buildings.

715. **the steep.** The slope of the Capitoline hill, up which the triumphal car of the victorious general ascended to the Capitol.

721-729. Our ignorance of Roman topography is great, and we are continually tempted mistakenly to identify ruins.

731. The trebly hundred triumphs. "Orosius gives 320 for the number of triumphs." (Byron's note.)

732-733. By the assassination of Caesar on the Ides (15th) of March, B.C. 44.

734. Tully (Marcus Tullius Cicero), the great orator (B.C. 106-43); Virgil (B.C. 70-20), the great poet; Livy (B.C. 59, A.D. 17), the great historian of Rome.

740-747. Sylla, or more properly, Sulla (B.C. 138-78), received the surname of Felix on account of his unbroken success. In B.C. 87 he set out against Mithridates, king of Pontus, in Asia Minor, without waiting to follow up his victory over his great rival Marius (ll. 740-744). His authority was supreme in Rome, and hence he may be said to have "annihilated senates," and to the surprise of all resigned his dictatorship, B.C. 79 and retired into private life (ll. 745-747).

755. There was no more space left to shadow with her wings; she had conquered the world.

764. "On the 3rd of September, Cromwell gained the victory of Dunbar: a year afterwards he obtained 'his crowning mercy' of Worcester, and a few years after, on the same day, which he had ever esteemed the most fortunate for him, died." (Byron's note.)

775. See *Julius Caesar*, iii., 2:

Even at the base of Pompey's statuë,
Which all the while ran blood, great Caesar fell.

This statue is supposed to be the same as one still extant in the Spada palace in Rome.

781. Nemesis. "A Greek goddess who measured out to mortals happiness and misery, and visited with losses and sufferings all who were blessed with too many gifts of fortune."

782. Pompey (B.C. 106-45), Caesar's great rival, the conqueror of Mithridates, Tigranes, etc., for a time allied with Caesar in the first triumvirate.

784. In the Capitoline Museum is a bronze representation of the wolf suckling Romulus and Remus. Some antiquarians suppose that is the statue which Cicero (*Catiline* iii., 8) refers to as having been struck by lightning; there is a fracture in one leg which might have been so caused.

800. **one vain man.** Napoleon.

804. **With steps unequal.** Cf. *Aen.* ii., 724: "sequiturque patrem non passibus aequis."

807. **immortal instinct.** Perhaps "immortal" is used in a sense opposed to "terrestrial" (l. 805), and the whole phrase refers vaguely to the higher genius of Caesar.

809-810. **Alcides, i.e.** Hercules, was represented as spinning for Queen Omphale in the dress of a hand-maiden. Caesar fell under the power of Cleopatra's charms when he went to Egypt in 48 B.C.

811. "Veni, vidi, vici" were the words in which Caesar announced to the senate his victory over Pharnaces, king of Pontus, in B.C. 47.

812. **his eagles.** The strong and aspiring spirits among the French who had brought about the revolution.

flee. Improperly used for *fly*.

815-816. The poet refers to a lack of reflection and principle,—indicated also in the last two lines of the stanza.

828. **Renew thy rainbow.** As the rainbow was the token that "the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh" (see *Gen.* ix.); so the poet prays that the deluges of blood and suffering which affect the earth may cease.

830. **Our senses narrow, etc.** The meaning is, *since our senses are narrow, etc.*

In his note on this stanza, Byron quotes Cicero *Academ.*, i., 13, which contains the same ideas: "Omnes pene veteres; qui nihil cognosci, nihil percepi, nihil sciri posse dixerunt; angustos sensus; imbecillos animos, brevia curricula vitae; in profundo veritatem demersam; opinionibus et institutis omnia teneri; nihil veritati relinqui: deinceps omnia tenebris circumfusa esse dixerunt."

850-855. The reference is to the members of the Holy Alliance who have freed Europe from the yoke of Napoleon only to bring it into subjection to another form of bondage. Hence "*doubly bowed.*"

859. According to the Greek myth the virgin goddess Pallas sprung completely armed out of the head of her father Zeus.

866. **Saturnalia.** A festival at Rome, when the utmost licence was permitted, even to *slaves*.

871. **the base pageant.** "The empire and court of Napoleon. It cannot mean the restoration of the Bourbons, though that was in reality 'last upon the scene,' because that could not be a 'pretext.'" (Tozer.) But Rolfe "cannot help thinking that the reference is to the congress of Vienna and the European restoration." Byron's loose way of writing is an argument in favour of Rolfe's interpretation.

874-875. Wordsworth considered this the finest image in Byron's poetry, "as displaying a grand ideal truth, symbolized by an equally grand and corresponding unusual phenomenon of the outer world." Freedom makes her way against adverse circumstances, as thunderstorms often come up *against* the wind.

883. Sudden transition to a conspicuous erection on the Via Appia. The inscription shows that it is the tomb of Caecilia, daughter of Metellus Creticus, and wife of Crassus; nothing else is known about her.

904. **Cornelia.** The mother of the Gracchi, who possessed all the best qualities of the typical Roman matron.

914-915. Byron quotes, in his note on this passage, the Greek proverb: "They whom the gods love, die young."

917. **Hesperus.** The star that brings in the evening.

927. **The wealthiest.** Crassus, her husband, was known as *Dives* 'the rich.'

935. **forth**=*forth from*.

945. **save what is here.** There is nothing to hope for superior to the present.

950. The home of the owls.

951. **the Palatine.** The Palatine Hill is one of the seven hills of Rome, and said to be the site of the original nucleus of the city. Here Augustus and his successors resided; hence called below (l. 963) "the Imperial Mount". It is now covered with ruins.

969. **'t is better written here.** The truth is more clearly exemplified in the scene before him than in the pages of history.

978. "Pyramid" is the object of the verb "pinnacled".

982. **Tully.** *Cicero*; See note on l. 734.

983. **Thou nameless column.** A conspicuous object in the Forum; its base was cleaned in 1813, and it is now known to have been erected in honour of the Emperor Phocas, A.D. 608.

985. The ivy was especially used as a symbol of literary excellence. (See *Hor. Od. i.* : “*Doctarum ederae praemia frontium*”), and is opposed here to the “laurel,” the meed of the conqueror.

986-987. The triumphal arch of Titus stands at the foot of the Palatine, and commemorates the victory of that emperor over the Jews, A.D. 70. The pillar of Trajan is in the Forum of Trajan, and is covered with reliefs representing his war with the Dacians, who were conquered in A.D. 106.

987-991. Pope Sixtus V. caused a statue of St. Peter to be placed on Trajan’s column, and one of St. Paul on the column of Marcus Aurelius. It was formerly supposed that the ashes of Trajan were placed on the top of the pillar ; they were in fact buried in an urn at the foot.

994-996. Trajan conquered Dacia and Parthia ; the latter was given up immediately after his death.

997-698. **unstain’d with household blood, etc.** There is a reference to Alexander’s killing his friend Clitus at a banquet.

1000-1. **the rock of Triumph, etc.** The Capitoline hill ; see l. 715, and note.

1002-4. **the steep Tarpeian, etc.** A precipice on the Capitoline hill whence criminals were thrown.

1005. **here.** In the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus.

1016-7. There is an antithesis between “mutes” and “voice,”—the members of the senate silent through fear, and orators who spoke for gain.

1021. **Petrarch.** See note on l. 262.

1022. **Rienzi.** A Roman who in 1347 headed a successful rebellion against the aristocracy, was elected tribune of the Roman republic, proposed a series of new laws, and made an attempt to realize Italian unity.

1026-7. **Numa.** Numa Pompilius, the second of the legendary kings of Rome, was famous as a legislator, hence the name is applied to Rienzi. In a grove near Rome he was visited by the mysterious nymph Egeria, who imparted her wisdom to him.

1031. **nympholepsy.** *Hallucination* ; literally, “possession by nymphs,” to whom the Greeks sometimes ascribed mental aberrations.

1036, ff. “The so-called *Grotto of Egeria* is a nymphaeum, originally covered with marble, the shrine of the brook Almo, which now flows

past it in an artificial channel, and was erected at a somewhat late period. A niche in the posterior wall contains the mutilated statue of the river god, standing on corbels, from which water used to flow." (Baedeker.)

1037. **Elysian.** Pertaining to Elysium, the region of the blest.

1040. The poet has in mind the complaint of Juvenal (iii., 18-20), that art had marred the graces of nature :

Quanto praesentius esset
Numen aquae, viridi si margine cluderet undas
Herba, nec ingenuum violarent marmora tofum.

1049. **many in their class.** Tozer interprets "of many different kinds."

1103. **it.** Seems to refer back to l. 1096 : "The unreach'd Paradise of our despair."

1105. Cf. *Hos.* viii., 7 : "For they have sown the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind."

1106-7. The reference is to the old alchemists ever hoping to win the secret of transmuting other metals into gold.

1112. **doubly curst.** By the lateness of the discovery, and by its unreality.

1122. **unspiritual.** Because circumstance has no guiding principle, or thought. Note the unpleasing stresses required by the verse.

1123. **miscreator.** Because circumstance leads us to pursue aims which are not suited to us, hence mis-shapes our lives.

1124. **crutch-like rod.** The influence of circumstance is likened, at once, to a crutch, which helps us lamely along our path, and to a magician's rod, which transforms our hopes into dust.*

1140. Cf. *Macbeth* iii., 4 :

But now I am cabin'd, cribb'd, confin'd, bound in
To saucy doubts and fears.

1143. **couch.** The technical term for removing a cataract from the eye.

1146. **dome.** See note on ll. 542-544.

1147. **Coliseum** (more properly Colosseum, so called from the colos-

sal statue of Nero which once adorned it), the largest amphitheatre in Rome, completed by Titus A.D. 80, containing seats for 87,000 spectators.

1157-8. **hath leant, etc.** Hath left his mark, but not wholly destroyed.

1162, ff. Byron appeals from the verdict of the present to the verdict of future generations.

1179. **they.** His detractors.

1181. **Nemesis.** See note on l. 781.

1182. **Here.** In Rome ; there is no special reference to the Colosseum.

1183-86. Clytaemnestra, the wife of Agamemnon, was false to, and slew, her husband. Her son Orestes avenged his father's murder, was, in consequence, seized with madness, and fled from land to land, pursued by the Erinnyes or Furies. The story is treated in the *Eumenides* of Aeschylus.

1221. **The Janus glance.** *Double-faced look* ; since Janus, the god of gates, had two faces, looking in opposite directions.

1224. **speechless obloquy.** Obloquy conveyed without the use of words.

1234. **The seal is set.** I have solemnly closed and ratified my imprecation.

thou dread power. The feeling of awe and veneration which belongs to the scene.

1243-49. The Colosseum was the scene of gladiatorial and other contests.

1250. **listed spot.** A place surrounded by *lists*, i.e. the barriers which enclosed places for tournaments.

1252. Byron describes the death of a gladiator, such as might have been once witnessed in the Colosseum ; he uses, however, in this description suggestions from a famous ancient statue, the so-called Dying Gladiator in the Capitoline Museum.

1252 and 1258 are defective from the point of view of metre.

1266. The Dacians were a very warlike people, living between the Danube and the Carpathian mountains.

1275. The question whether a wounded gladiator should be spared or slain, was determined by the caprice of the audience.

1279-80. From the 14th century on, the Colosseum was regarded as a quarry. Baedeker enumerates several large buildings which were constructed of material obtained from it.

1283. **clear'd**, *i.e.*, of debris and rubbish.

1284. **developed**. *Brought into light*; cf. similar use of the word in l. 289.

1293. "Suetonius informs us that Julius Caesar was particularly gratified by that decree of the senate which enabled him to wear a wreath of laurel on all occasions. He was anxious, not to show that he was the conqueror of the world, but to hide that he was bald." (Byron's note.)

1297-1302. "This is quoted in the *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* as a proof that the Coliseum was entire when seen by the Anglo-Saxon pilgrims at the end of the 7th or the beginning of the 8th century." (Byron's note.) The saying is ascribed to the Venerable Bede.

1306. A sudden transition to the *Pantheon*, "the only edifice of ancient Rome which is still in perfect preservation as regards the walls and the vaulting"; built by Agrippa, the friend of Augustus, B.C. 27; consecrated in 609 A.D. as *S. Maria ad Martyres*; in commemoration of the event, the festival of All Saints was instituted. It is a large, circular structure, lighted by a single aperture in the centre of the dome. On seven niches about the walls stood originally statues, including those representing Mars, Venus and Caesar, etc. "The Pantheon has been the receptacle for the busts of modern great, or at least distinguished, men."

1324. "This and the three next stanzas allude to the story of a Roman daughter, which is recalled to the traveller by the site, or pretended site, of that adventure, now shown at the church of St. Nicola in Carcere." (Byron's note.) The story, called the '*Caritas Romana*,' is of a father condemned to die of hunger, but nourished by the milk of his own daughter.

1341. **Cain was Eve's**. The selection of the example is characteristic of Byron's bitter and cynical mood.

1351. The fable tells that Heracles, after he was born of Alcmena, was put to the breast of Hera while she was asleep; on awaking she thrust the infant away, and the milk spilled produced the Milky Way.

1360. The mole, or mausoleum, of Hadrian resembles in its hugeness and purpose the pyramids of Egypt, but not in form, as one might suppose from this passage. It was converted into a fortress and is now known as the castle of St. Angelo.

1369. This and the next six stanzas refer to St. Peter's.

1370. **Diana's marvel.** The temple of Diana at Ephesus, the largest ever erected by the Greeks.

1375. **Sophia's bright roofs.** The mosque of St. Sophia at Constantinople; it was originally a Christian church.

1432. **the Vatican.** The palace of the Popes, which contains most magnificent collections of works of art.

1433. This refers to one of the most famous groups of ancient statuary. It represents the crisis of the story which is most familiar from Virgil's version, *Aen.* ii., 201, foll.; Laocoon and his two sons are, in the group, being strangled in the coils of the two serpents.

1441, fol., refer to another famous piece of antique sculpture preserved in the Vatican, known as the Apollo Belvedere. The left hand was wanting when the statue was found. Byron accepts the view that it held a bow, but this is not admitted by the latest modern criticism.

1459. **Prometheus**, one of the Titans, is represented in Greek myth as the benefactor of mankind, and thereby incurring the hostility of Zeus. He stole fire from heaven, and taught men the useful arts, and was punished by being chained to Mount Caucasus. He is the subject of Aeschylus' great drama *Prometheus Bound*. Byron in this passage interprets "the fire" as meaning the spiritual energy of man. According to one version of the ancient story, Prometheus made men of clay and animated them with fire.

1468, fol. Childe Harold, whose pilgrimage is supposed to be the theme of the poem, has in fact not been mentioned since l. 495, Canto III.

1478. **in.** This preposition is connected with "gathers," not with "inherit."

1488-9. When this frame shall be resolved into something less than is essential to its existence, *i.e.*, into its elements.

1490. **idle name.** "Idle" because when dead, our reputation will be of no avail to us.

1492. **can we be made the same.** This is vaguely expressed—*made into nothing.*

1495, fol. His thoughts of death suggest the recent death of the Princess Charlotte, daughter of the Prince Regent (afterwards George IV.) and heir presumptive to the throne. She died in childbirth, Nov. 1817, and was widely lamented.

1516-17. **cease to hoard, etc.** Cease gathering together her many causes of grief in order to dwell on her one grief for thee.

1519. **Iris.** The rainbow—the symbol of hope.

Thou, too, etc. Prince Leopold of Saxe-Cobourg, husband of the Princess.

1549. **Nemi.** The Lake of Nemi in the Alban hills, to the south-east of Rome, 1066 feet above the sea level, is an extinct crater about three miles in circuit. "The Lake of Nemi lies in a very deep bottom, so surrounded on all sides with mountains and groves that the surface of it is never ruffled with the least breath of wind, which, perhaps, together with the clearness of the water, gave it formerly the name of Diana's Looking-glass." (Byron.)

1558. The Lake of Albano in a neighbouring valley, also an extinct crater, is considerably larger than Nemi.

1561-2. **the Epic war, etc.** The war described in the *Aeneid* which in most editions begins: "Arma virumque cano." The "man" is Aeneas, who, after sharing in the defeat of the Trojans at the fall of Troy, became the founder of the Empire of Rome.

1563. **beneath thy right, etc.** At Tusculum (modern Frascati) Cicero had a villa.

1566. **The Sabine farm** of Horace (see *Epist.* i.).

1571. **midland ocean.** *I.e.*, the Mediterranean.

1574. **Calpe's rock.** Calpe is the ancient name of Gibraltar.

Beheld it last. "'Last' must refer to Byron's first view of the Mediterranean from Gibraltar on his first journey, though he had often seen it since; but that was the last occasion on which he and Childe Harold together had caught sight of it, as he supposes them to be doing now from the Alban Mount." (Tozer.) Byron embarked from Gibraltar August, 1809, and reached Constantinople, May, 1810. Soon after he visited the *Symplegades*, two island rocks situated at the place where the Bosphorus joins the *Euxine* or Black Sea.

1603, fol. It has been suggested that the ideas contained in this passage are from *De Stael's Corinne*: "Cette superbe mer, sur laquelle l'homme jamais ne peut imprimer sa trace. Ta terre est travaillée par lui, les montagnes sont coupées par ses routes ; les rivières se resserrent en canaux pour porter ses marchandises ; mais si les vaisseaux sillonnent un moment les ondes, la vague vient effacer aussitôt cette légère marque de servitude, et la mer reparait telle qu'elle fut au premier jour de la création."

Swinburne says of the address to the Ocean: "Allowing for one or two slips and blots, we must after all replace it among the choice and high possessions of poetry. After the first there is hardly a weak line ; many have a wonderful vigour and melody ; and the deep and glad disdain of the sea for men and the works of men passes into the verse in music and fills it with a weighty and sonorous harmony, grave and sweet as the measured voice of heavy remote waves."

1611. *unknell'd, uncoffin'd, and unknown.* See note on *Deserted Village*, l. 258.

1620. *lay for lie.* This ugly vulgarism is an obtrusive blot upon the stanza.

1648, fol. Byron was a good swimmer, and often refers to his achievements as such.

1672. *sandal-shoon and scallop-shell* were tokens of the pilgrim in former times ; the shell was worn in his hat. Cf. Ophelia's song in *Hamlet* :

How should I my true love know
From another one ;
By his cockle hat and staff
And his sandal shoon.

SHELLEY.

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY was born Aug. 4th, 1792, at the family residence, Field Place, near Horsham, in Sussex. His father, Timothy Shelley, was a country squire, and a member of parliament, a man of commonplace character and limited ideas. Percy was the eldest son,—the natural heir, therefore, to a landed estate, and to a large fortune which had been accumulated by his grandfather. The latter, who lived until after his grandson had attained maturity, was an eccentric and avaricious old man, whose main aim in life was to found a family, and to entail a large estate on his posterity—ambitions in which Mr. Timothy Shelley fully shared. The poet grew up amidst the ordinary surroundings of an English country gentleman, and was sent, in succession, to a private boarding-school, to Eton, and to Oxford. He was very unlike, however, the ordinary English schoolboy, was of a dreamy temperament, of precociously bookish tendencies, and took but little interest in boyish sports. Most momentous of all his characteristics was an innate suspicion and dislike of everything that is consecrated or imposed by authority. Accordingly, while a fair scholar, his chief energies at school were given to studies outside the regular curriculum; and, although freer than most from vicious tendencies, he came into serious collision with his teachers. Nor were his relations with the mass of his fellow pupils pleasant. His oddities and disregard of the usages of a public school brought upon him the persecution of his companions, who delighted to see the impetuous boy worked into a frenzy of rage. These experiences may have served to intensify that sympathy with the weak, and that hatred of oppression, which were so manifest in his maturer years. His literary propensities early exhibited themselves; before he left Eton he had written a novel and poems, which he managed to have printed.

At Oxford, whither he went in 1810, the various peculiarities we have mentioned became more marked. He neglected the regular work of the place, but plunged into the study of questions of a metaphysical and abstract nature. These he delighted to discuss with a congenial companion, but mingled little in general society. With boyish ardour he embraced the most ultra-liberal opinions, at a time when such opinions were regarded with extraordinary disfavour by a generation which had seen the excesses of the French Revolution. He became radical and atheist, showed practical sympathy with men who were prosecuted by the government for their advanced views in politics, and was eager to do something for the dissemination of his own opinions. This propagandism

had a serious effect upon his career. A brief pamphlet arguing against the existence of a God, which he wrote and circulated in print, led to his expulsion from the university after a few months' residence, and embroiled him with his father. Thus at the age of nineteen, he set out on an independent course with no guide except his own impulsive, impractical mind. It is true a partial reconciliation with his father was presently brought about; but, from this time onward, father and son regarded one another with mutual distrust and aversion. It now became Percy's one serious aim in life to illuminate the darkened world with the light of his own peculiar views. As a beginning, he attempted to make converts of his young sisters, and of a school friend of theirs, Harriet Westebrooke, a girl of sixteen, the daughter of a retired and well-to-do innkeeper. The latter connection resulted in an elopement and marriage (Aug., 1811), into which Shelley seems to have been carried rather by circumstances than from any deep feeling, or preconceived intention of his own. This marriage widened the breach with his father; but the latter, at length, consented to make an allowance to the young couple, who were in great pecuniary straits. In the early part of 1812 we find them in Dublin, whither Shelley was drawn by his ever-present desire to reform the world. The perennial Irish difficulty had reached a crisis at this date; Shelley, with characteristic ardour, and blindness to practical conditions, believed that he knew the remedy for the ills of Ireland, and that he could prevail upon the Irish people to adopt it. There, he hoped to make the first step towards that grand amelioration of the social and political condition of the world, which he contemplated as the object of his life. He spoke at a public meeting and issued a pamphlet; there were no apparent results; in a few weeks his enthusiasm was dampened, and he returned to England. In this same year he began what may be regarded as his first serious essay in poetry, *Queen Mab*. It is an attempt to clothe his revolutionary ideas in poetic form; it gives one picture of the world as it has been, and another of what it will be when these ideas are accepted and acted upon by men in general. From the poetic point of view the work cannot be regarded as successful; the didactic impulse dominates the imaginative. From a practical point of view it had an unfortunate effect upon the poet's career; the outspoken denunciations of current religious beliefs and of consecrated institutions, such as marriage, brought Shelley's name into bad odour.

Shelley's hasty marriage seemed, at first, to turn out better than might have been expected, but as years went on, the want of mutual understanding and sympathy became apparent. Shelley, at least, did not feel

happy in his family relations ; and in July, 1814, suddenly severed them by eloping to the Continent with Mary Godwin, the daughter of his friend and chief teacher in philosophic matters, William Godwin. According to Shelley's views, marriage was dissoluble at the will of the parties concerned ; his letters to Harriet seem to indicate that he had no perception of the wrong that he had done her, or of the feelings with which she must have regarded such a step. On his return to England in autumn began a period of pecuniary worry ; he was continually in hiding from the bailiffs, and suffered much from ill-health.

The year 1816 marks, for several reasons, a turning point in Shelley's career. In the first place, his money difficulties came to an end, except in so far as his lavish generosity and his indifference to pecuniary matters continued to embarrass him throughout his life. His grandfather and father had regarded with consternation the prospect of the family wealth coming one day into the power of their eccentric heir ; but their attempts at persuading or bribing Percy into entailing the estates had failed, for entail was inconsistent with his advanced principles. Now, however, an arrangement was entered into between Timothy Shelley and his son, in virtue of which the latter was to abandon certain prospective claims upon the family inheritance, and was to receive, in return, an income of £1000, and the payment of his existing debts. In the second place, he this year wrote *Alastor*, the first poetic work worthy of his genius. From this time on, while maintaining his interest in abstract and practical questions, his literary activity became mainly poetical ; the imaginative triumphed over the ratiocinative faculty. Shelley and Mary spent the summer in Switzerland. Here he met Byron, and the two poets were constantly in one another's society. In the autumn of the same year, Harriet Shelley committed suicide ; and soon after Shelley and Mary were married. He now became involved in a chancery suit for the custody of his children by his first wife. On the ground of the views contained in the poet's works, and of the fact that these views (*e.g.* with regard to marriage) had been put into practice by Shelley, the Lord Chancellor decided that the father was not a proper person for the custody and education of his children. They were, accordingly, entrusted by the court to a guardian who should bring them up in the doctrines of the English church, and in the moral opinions held by Englishmen in general. This decision was a terrible blow to Shelley ; he regarded it as tyrannical and unjust, and it served to intensify his hatred for existing social and political institutions which he already regarded with abhorrence. He yearned more than ever for a

complete reconstruction of society to be brought about, not by violence and blood, as had been attempted in the French Revolution, but by moral and intellectual forces—by persuasion, and by the example of noble and self-sacrificing lives of those who had embraced the new doctrines. His imaginary picture of such a Revolution is contained in a poem written in the year 1817, *The Revolt of Islam*, the longest but by no means one of the happiest, of Shelley's works.

The feelings engendered by the chancery suit, the desire of benefitting his health, which was ailing, and various other causes, led Shelley in the spring of 1818 to take up his residence in Italy. Here he spent the few remaining years of his life, not settled in any one place, but wandering to and fro, feeling keenly his isolation; for though his works were scarcely read, he now had a certain amount of notoriety, and was regarded by most of the English in Italy as a monster of immorality in private life, and a representative of the "Satanic School" in poetry. He enjoyed, however, intimacy with a small circle of friends, Byron being in the number. During these years, his nature mellowed and his views became somewhat less crude. His poetic productiveness grew both in quantity and quality. It was in this last period of his life that he wrote nearly all those shorter poems which are the surest basis of his fame, as well as the best of his longer works, *Prometheus Unbound*, *The Cenci*, *Epipsychidion*, and *Adonais*. The Shelleys and their friends, Captain and Mrs. Williams, occupied, in common, a villa close to the shores of the Mediterranean. On July 8th, 1822, Shelley and Captain Williams, while returning from Leghorn in a sailing-boat of their own, encountered a storm. There was no witness to relate what followed, but more than a week later the two bodies were found on the shore. To comply with the Italian quarantine regulations, the body of Shelley was burnt on the beach in the presence of Byron and others. The ashes were buried in the Protestant cemetery at Rome, so beautifully described by Shelley himself in the closing stanzas of the *Adonais*.

In regard to his character, and relations to the world about him, Shelley may be contrasted with Scott. As, among literary men, Scott is distinguished by a certain wholesome commonplaceness of character, and by a temperament and intellect which led him to accept things as they were, and to adjust himself easily to the men and to the conditions amidst which he lived; so, on the contrary, Shelley was decidedly abnormal, with little capacity for adapting himself to the situation in which he was placed, neither understanding the average man, nor understood by him. Shelley approximates to the popular idea—so often a

false one—that the poet is an odd creature, with brilliant endowments of a certain kind, but without ballast, and, in the ordinary affairs of life, rather inferior than superior to men in general. He, in short, illustrates in some measure Dryden's couplet :

Great wits are sure to madness near allied,
And their partitions do their bounds divide.

Scott's life was normal ; the ordinary man can understand his motives and sympathize with his aims. Shelley's life was eccentric ; his aims, in the eyes of the world, were chimerical ; his motives, absurd. Among the qualities whose extraordinary development in him made him appear unbalanced, were emotional intensity, quickness and vividness of imagination, keen interest in the conceptions of the mind and fancy, with comparative blindness to external things, and disregard for what people call the substantial concerns of life. Hence experience taught him little ; from it he got neither knowledge nor discipline. He was childish, sensitive, impetuous, ardent. It is impossible that such a person should succeed in delineating, truly and successfully, human life and men and women, as Shakespeare and Scott have delineated them. But he who feels more keenly and finely than others, is in so far fitted to express feelings ; he may, if he has the gift of language, be a great lyric poet. A great lyric poet Shelley is. Now, the earlier lyric poets and the majority of lyric poets, sing the obvious joys and sorrows which are connected with the universal experiences of men :—the joys of the feast, of victory, of love ; the sorrows of defeat, parting, and death. Emotions of this universal character we find embodied in the songs of Burns. But Shelley's most characteristic and successful lyrics give utterance to the more subtle aspects of these feelings, and to vaguer emotions which belong to more complex and more intellectual experiences. Burns is the poet of the many, Shelley of the few. Shelley's nature, little sensuous, more open to impressions of pain than of joy, eager, incapable of making allowance and taking things as they are, found refuge from the actual world in an ideal world of his own fancy. Society and institutions are, of course, moulded by, and hence in harmony with, the needs of the ordinary man ; they suit him ; he naturally feels at home and comfortable. The abnormal Shelley found that the arrangements of the world did not at all harmonize with his conceptions ; he was continually coming into collision with individuals and institutions, and was ill at ease. What gives his poetry its distinctive mark is the predominance of this note of dissatisfaction with the attainable, and of yearning for the unattainable. He expresses for us the sadness that

we feel at the imperfection which necessarily attends all earthly happiness, the yearning that we have for our distant past, which is surrounded by a poetic glamour on account of its remoteness, the longing for the ideal future, for ideal beauty, for ideal happiness. This tendency towards the unreal shows itself even in his description of scenery. He does not usually strive to reproduce nature as he has seen it, like Wordsworth or Scott ; he builds up from what he has actually beheld, purely imaginary scenes, more beautiful, more imposing, more awful than those of nature, that they may afford a background to the sentiments which at the moment are dominating him. His longer poems *Alastor*, *Prometheus*, *Epipsychidion* are full of illustrations of this peculiarity.

Another very pronounced tendency of Shelley's mind remains to be noted, a tendency very rarely found in poetical natures,—especially in a nature so emotional and imaginative as Shelley's. This is a bent towards abstract investigation, a delight in the metaphysical inquiries which lie at the basis of religion, politics, and social science, a respect for, and faith in, pure logic, such as we are wont to find rather in philosophers and scientific men, than in poets. This tendency, combined with his dislike of existing things, made him early in life a disciple of the doctrinaire philosophy associated with the French Revolution. This philosophy he embraced with enthusiasm ; and, ignorant as he was of history and of practical human nature, he had no perception of the difficulty there is in changing received ideas, or of the still greater difficulty of getting the world to change its ways in accordance with new ideas. In the earlier part of his career at least, he looked forward to the speedy realization of a millennium, when all men would be good, and wise, and loving. This millennium was to be brought about simply by overthrowing the old. Emancipate human nature from the cramping influence of evil traditions and customs, the fundamental goodness of the race would assert itself, and all be well. Hence an intensely democratic spirit in Shelley. He has supreme faith in the masses, an enthusiasm for liberty, an ardour in the war against the traditions of the past, that make him the chief representative of the modern democratic spirit in English poetry. Most of his longer works give expression to Shelley's views as to the present and future of the race :—the evils of the past and of the present order of things, the principles which should actuate every true lover of mankind, the future that lies before mankind when these principles are put in practice by men in general. This is the theme of *Queen Mab*, of *The Revolt of Islam*, of *Prometheus*. The ignorance of real life, and actual human nature which these poems display, the intangibility, un-

reality of the future which they depict, the remoteness of such abstract principles from the flesh-and-blood sympathies of the majority of men, militate greatly against the popularity of these works. They are also marred by the poet's inability to develop a theme clearly, and to construct a successful plot—defects which are not felt in shorter lyric poems. On the other hand the intense ardour and earnestness of the poet, his marvellous command of language, imagery and versification serve to redeem some at least of these longer works in the estimation of even the most unsympathetic reader.

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OZYMANDIAS OF EGYPT.

First published in Jan., 1818. The Greek historian, Diodorus, gives an account of the statue referred to in the poem. It was reputed, he says, the largest in Egypt, the foot exceeding seven cubits in length; the inscription was: "I am Ozymandias, king of kings; if any one wishes to know what I am and where I lie, let him surpass me in some of my exploits." (See *Diod.*, i., 47, or Wilkinson's *Ancient Egypt*, Vol. I., chap. ii.)

This sonnet is a simple example of the way in which the poetic imagination works. The transitoriness and littleness of human achievement, in comparison with the permanence and might of the forces of nature, is a familiar thought, and awakens impressive emotions. The poet's genius shows itself in happily seizing upon the shattered image of the vainglorious Egyptian monarch as a concrete type or embodiment of the general idea, and in making every detail of the picture suggest, and harmonize with, the emotions which accompany the central idea.

The extreme irregularity of this sonnet as regards form will be noted. Three of the lines, 2, 4, 9, do not rhyme at all ; perhaps the poet felt a certain, if not rhyme, at least assonance, between lines 2 and 4, 9 and 11. In *arrangement of thought* the poem conforms more closely to the regular sonnet ; the first eight lines are introductory, the last six contain the pith of the matter. Note how " Nothing beside remains," is the key-stone of the conclusion, on each side of which stand the contrasted ideas ; note, also, the fine sweep of the concluding lines.

The freedom, or ever carelessness, of Shelley's treatment of the accepted laws of the sonnet, and, yet, the aptness of the form adopted are characteristic of the poet. We find the same thing repeatedly in his treatment of the laws of metre ; the poet's impetuosity and independence led him to disregard the accepted canons of his art, yet the fervour and force of his genius moulded the form exactly to suit the feeling.

7. which, etc. *I.e.* survive, inasmuch as they are depicted on the features of the statue.

8. The hand, etc. The hand of the sculptor.

them. The passions (l. 6).

the heart. The heart of the monarch.

TO A SKYLARK.

Written and published in 1820. This is not merely one of the most beautiful of Shelley's poems, but represents in miniature the very essence of Shelley's spirit and work. The skylark, as he watches it, becomes the incarnation of what he himself would fain be. Its flight heavenward typifies his yearning for some ideal world which would satisfy a spirit bruised amidst the hard and hateful realities of life. Its unpremeditated and impetuous music is like Shelley's own song, except, alas ! that the lark's strain seems the expression of undiluted joy,—a joy, therefore, that does not belong to men, in whose cup there is ever something of bitterness mingled. The lark, therefore, thinks the poet, is master of the secret of the universe for which Shelley's whole life was a search, and the solution of which would explain or reconcile us to its defects. Shelley, it is true, believed, with the French philosophers of the 18th century, that human nature is fundamentally good, and that men, could they only get rid of bad institutions, governments, religions, etc.,

would become wise and innocent. To such a consummation he looked forward; such a consummation he depicts in the *Prometheus*, and elsewhere. But, after all, there would be a residue of imperfections in the world,—death, for instance. There must be some hidden explanation which would harmonize these apparent evils with good. Could he but catch this secret, and sing it to the world like the lark!

5. **profuse.** The verse accent falls on *pro*, the word accent on *fuse*, hence a division of the stress—called “hovering” accent—a phenomenon rather frequent in Shelley’s poems, and often happy in its effect.

8. The punctuation is that of the original ed. Professor Craik (*English Literature*, ii., 498) proposed to change the place of the semicolon: “Very absurdly the cloud of fire which the bird has become in the poet’s imagination is, by the removal of the semicolon from its proper place at the end of the second line to the end of the third, represented, not as soaring in the deep blue of the sky, but as springing from the earth—which is what nobody ever saw a cloud do; not a cloud of fire, or cloud glowing with coloured radiance at any rate; and would, besides, give us as forced and false an image of a lark commencing its ascent as could be well put into rhyme or into words—for the cloud of fire was only, according to the pointless pointing, the appearance which the bird presented (and which yet it never could have presented) when rising from the earth.” Professor Baynes (*Edinb. Rev.*, April, 1871) successfully defends the original punctuation: “The whole reasoning . . . rests on the assumption that in the second verse the lark is described as leaving the ground. This is, however, a complete mistake, the critic, having failed to notice that in the opening verse of the poem the lark, when first addressed by the poet, is already far up in the sky; and that in the second verse she continues to ascend further and further from the earth, higher and higher into the air. The image, ‘like a cloud of fire,’ applies not to the appearance of the bird at all, as Professor Craik supposes, but to the continuous motion upward, for the obvious reason that ‘fire ascending seeks the sun.’”

12. The sun is still below the horizon.

15. **unbodied.** Prof. Craik changed this to *embodied*, adding “undoubtedly the true word, though always perverted into *unbodied*,—as if joy were a thing which naturally wore a body.” Again, Prof. Baynes defends what is undoubtedly the true, as it is the original, reading: “At the outset, Shelley addresses the skylark as a spirit singing in the pure empyrean, and ever soaring nearer to heaven’s gate as she sings.

He then apostrophizes the emancipated soul of melody on the celestial lightness and freedom in which it now expatiates. To the swift, sympathetic imagination of the poet, the scorner of the ground, floating far up in the golden light, had become an aerial rapture, a disembodied joy, a 'delighted spirit,' whose ethereal race had just begun."

16-17. The pale purple of the night vanishes under the influence of the sun's rays.

22. that silver sphere, the star of l. 18.

71-72. What is it that causes you to sing with such intensity of gladness?

80. **knew**, for knew'st. So *drew* for *drew'st* in *Epipsychidion*, l. 369.

THE RECOLLECTION.

This is one of two companion poems addressed "*To Jane*," written in 1822, and published in a fragmentary form as one poem by Mrs. Shelley in 1824, in their present form in 1839. The other poem is entitled, *The Invitation*, and anticipates the delights of that excursion to the pine forest of the Cascine, near Pisa, of which the present poem is the recollection. The "Jane" to whom this and several other later poems of Shelley's are addressed, was the wife of his friend, Captain Williams, who shared Shelley's last residence and untimely fate. Mrs. Williams was a graceful and charming woman, who seemed to Shelley the realization of the conception he had in mind when describing the lady in *The Sensitive Plant*.

The Recollection has the note of regret and yearning, and of dissatisfaction with the present, so characteristic of the poet.

5. **Up, do**. In the earlier form of the poem, *And do*.

15. The earlier version reads: "And in the woods and on the deep."

19. "Which shed to earth," etc., in the earlier version.

24. The earlier version reads, "With stems like serpents interlaced." *Rude* is *rough, unformed*, as in Milton's *Hymn on the Nativity*, 31 "in the rude manger lies." This does not seem appropriate to "*serpents interlaced*." In the earlier reading (as "rude" must refer either to "giants" or to "storms") the likeness to the serpents lies only in

the twisting of the stems. It would seem as if Shelley had amended the halting metre of the earlier version at the sacrifice of the original meaning, and of the appropriateness of the comparison.

28. *its*. *Heaven's*.

35. Notice the licence, a rhyme on what is properly an unemphatic syllable.

42. *white* is *wide* in the ed. of 1839, but "white" in the earlier form, and in a MS. still existing. *White* is evidently the better reading, the plain extending about them was not a *mountain* waste. The "mountain waste" was to their eyes a boundary line, not an extended surface.

43. *soft*. *Bright* in earlier version.

46. *thrilling*. *Thinking* in earlier version.

49-52. In earlier version these lines read :

For still it seemed the centre of
The magic circle there
Was one whose being filled with love
The breathless atmosphere.

51. *fair Form*. The lady addressed.

52. After this line, in the earlier version, appeared the following stanza, cancelled, doubtless, on account of the resemblance to lines 63-64 :

Were not the crocuses that grew
Under the Ilex tree,
As beautiful in scent and hue
As ever fed the bee ?

53. *paused*. *Stood* in earlier version ; note the improvement in sound.

55. " And each seemed like a sky," in earlier version.

55, fol. Shelley delights in describing reflections in the water. The reflection, with its softened outlines and mysterious suggestiveness, is a sort of idealization of the real scene.

60. *purser*. *Clearer* in earlier version.

61. *lovely*. *Waving* in earlier version.

65-68. In earlier version :

There lay far glades and neighbouring lawn,
And through the dark green crowd
The white sun twinkling like the dawn
Under a speckled cloud.

74. **Elysian.** In the Latin poets Elysium is the residence of the shades of the blessed.

This line read in the earlier version : " Within an Elysium air," and line 76 : " A silence sleeping there."

84. **one dear.** *Thy bright* in earlier version.

85-88. In the earlier version :

For thou art good and dear and kind,
The forest ever green,
But less of peace in S——'s mind
Than calm in waters seen.

KEATS.

JOHN KEATS was born in London, October, 1795. He was the son of Thomas Keats, who had come from the west of England, obtained employment as an hostler in the livery stable of John Jennings, risen to be head-stableman, and had finally married his employer's daughter. About the time of this marriage, Mr. Jennings, who was well-to-do in the world, retired to the country, and left the management of the business in the hands of his son-in-law. John was the eldest child; three other children survived infancy,—two sons, George and Tom, and a daughter. The father is described as a superior sort of man, "of fine common-sense and natural respectability"; the mother, as a very clever woman, impulsive, and fond of amusement. The parents were ambitious for their boys, and sent them to a very good private boarding-school kept by the Rev. John Clarke, father of Cowden Clarke, the Shakespeare commentator. This school was at Enfield, in the neighbourhood of London, and occupied a handsome red-brick mansion with pleasant grounds about it. Soon after John's entrance at this school, his father was killed by a fall from his horse (April, 1804). Within a twelvemonth the widow married again, but soon separated from her husband, and went to live at Edmonton with her mother, who was now also a widow. The grandfather had left £13,000, which would in the end mainly come to his four grandchildren. In 1810 Keats' mother died of consumption; and the orphans were left to the care of their grandmother, and their legal guardian, a certain Mr. Abbey. In this same year, 1810, John's short school days came to an end, and he was apprenticed to a surgeon at Edmonton. At school he was well liked by his companions, and showed himself a high-spirited and very pugnacious boy. His studies were not, of course, carried far. In Latin he had advanced as far as the reading of Virgil, but had never learnt any Greek. During his later school years he had been a diligent student, and had become interested in general literature, reading whatever books came within his reach. After going to Edmonton, he maintained this interest, and also his connection with the Clarkes, especially with Cowden Clarke, some years his senior, who lent him books and otherwise cherished his literary tastes. One of these books was the works of Spenser, which struck a responsive chord in the breast of the young poet, roused his keenest enthusiasm, and stimulated him to poetic attempts of his own. In 1814, Keats removed to London in

order to continue his medical studies at the hospitals. In midsummer, 1815, John Keats passed with credit as licentiate at Apothecaries Hall, and was appointed a dresser at Guy's Hospital.

Meanwhile surgery was becoming distasteful to him, and his predilection for literature increasing. He had become intimate with a number of men of literary tastes and occupations, and began to form the plan of devoting his life to poetry. Of these acquaintances the most influential and distinguished was Leigh Hunt, the well-known essayist and poet, at this period notorious as the editor of *The Examiner*, the chief organ of English liberalism. Hunt was naturally accepted by the young literary novice as a mentor, and his influence is plainly perceptible in Keats' earlier style. Certain qualities were undoubtedly common to the two men;—an unusual power of perceiving and appreciating the beautiful and delightful things of this world, a tendency to disregard rules and convention in poetry, a love of the Elizabethan poets. Hunt tended to an over-easy, slipshod, poetical style; and, in this matter at least, exercised an unfavourable influence upon the younger poet. Of other living literary men, Wordsworth inspired Keats with intense admiration, but not with the desire to imitate; for he was fully conscious that his own genius was quite unlike that of the philosophical and somewhat stoical author of *The Excursion*.

To Hunt and his other friends, the young Keats seems to have given an impression of great power and promise. He possessed qualities of heart and spirit which specially endeared him to those who knew him well. His friends were not few, and throughout his short life and after his untimely death, these friends speak of him with rare warmth. They emphasize especially the manliness of his character, his keen sense of honour, his unselfishness, generosity and gentleness, and his sound common-sense. The family affections were also strong among the Keatses, and his brothers fully believed in his greatness, and sympathized with his poetic aspirations. Professor Colvin sums up the various accounts of his personal appearance that have been handed down: "A small, handsome, ardent-looking youth—the stature little over five feet; the figure compact and well turned, with the neck thrust eagerly forward, carrying a strong and shapely head set off by thick, clustering gold-brown hair: the features powerful, finished and mobile: the mouth rich and wide, with an expression at once combative and sensitive in the extreme: the forehead not high, but broad and strong: the eye-brows nobly arched, and eyes hazel-brown, liquid-flashing, visibly inspired—'an eye that had an inward look perfectly

divine, like a Delphian priestess who saw visions.'” His friend Haydon, the painter, says: “He was in his glory in the fields. The humming of a bee, the sight of a flower, the glitter of the sun, seemed to make his nature tremble; then his eyes flashed, his cheek glowed, and his mouth quivered.”

In March, 1807, encouraged by the approbation of his friends, Keats put forth his first volume of poems. The immaturity and defects of these are very manifest, while, as Colvin says, “the beauties appealed only to the poetically minded”; hence it turned out a failure, the small initial sale presently ceasing altogether. The poet, notwithstanding, began a more ambitious work, and in search of congenial surroundings went to the Isle of Wight, whence he writes: “I find I cannot do without poetry—without eternal poetry; half the day will not do—the whole of it. I began with a little, but habit has made me a leviathan. I had become all in a tremble from not having written anything of late; the sonnet over-leaf did me good; I slept better last night for it; this morning, however, I am nearly as bad again . . . I shall forthwith begin my *Endymion*.” After visiting Margate and Canterbury, he returned to London and took lodgings in Hampstead; in this charming suburb of London he, from this date onwards, usually resided. *Endymion*, a poem which narrates the love of the hero for Spirit of the Moon, was completed in 1817, and published in the following year. It is ill-constructed, full of obvious blemishes, yet of extraordinary poetic promise, and contains passages of wonderful beauty. Of its imperfections, no one was more conscious than the author, who, in the preface, acknowledges “its great inexperience, immaturity, and every error denoting a feverish attempt, rather than a deed accomplished.” But he said it was as good as he could make it, and he thought his time would be better employed in attempting something new than in amending the old.

Meantime, his brother George had resolved to seek his fortune in America. John accompanied him as far as Liverpool, and then set out with a friend on a pedestrian tour in Scotland. He over-exerted himself, and had to return before its completion. This was the beginning of the ill-health which was to terminate in his early death. At present it was aggravated by the fact that—in the absence of George Keats—the task of nursing his brother Tom, who had always been delicate, and was now in an advanced stage of consumption, devolved upon the poet. This duty, which he tenderly fulfilled, occupied most of his time during the next few months. Another cause of depression was the appearance

of a brutal and personal attack upon Keats in the *Quarterly Review*—an article which was subsequently represented to the world, both by Shelley and Byron, as being a cause of the poet's death. In the beginning of December, 1818, Tom Keats died at the age of twenty. Charles Armitage Brown writes : "Early one morning I was awakened in my bed by a pressure on my hand. It was Keats, who came to tell me that his brother was no more. I said nothing, and we remained silent for a while, my hand fast locked in his. At length, my thoughts returning from the dead to the living, I said—'Have nothing more to do with those lodgings,—and alone, too! Had you not better live with me?' He paused, pressed my hand warmly, and replied,—'I think it would be better.' From that moment he was my inmate."

Before his brother's death he had made the acquaintance of a young lady, Miss Fanny Brawne, a neighbour of his in Hampstead, and in the early part of the following year they were betrothed. In a letter written in May, 1817, Keats had said : "Truth is I have a horrid morbidity of temperament which has shown itself at intervals—it is, I have no doubt, the greatest enemy and stumbling-block I have to fear." This morbidity, which arose, perhaps, partly from physical weakness, and largely, perhaps, from the extreme sensitiveness of his nature, now began to dominate his life. The tendency was, at this date, increased by ill-health—the gradual and insidious approaches of the hereditary foe, consumption—by the consequent excessive strain which poetic composition put upon him, by money troubles, and the gloomy outlook of his material prospects, now, on account of his engagement, for the first time seriously burdening the poet—and, more than all perhaps, by the ardour of his passion, which seemed too intense for the poet's spiritual and physical constitution. Nevertheless, during these months some of his finest work was written—notably his great odes. In the attempt to regain physical strength and mental composure, he went to the Isle of Wight and subsequently to Winchester. His health and spirits improved, but on his return to London in October, the benefit was speedily lost. His housemate, Armitage Brown, describes his condition : "I quickly perceived that he was more [unhappy] than I had feared; his abstraction, his occasional lassitude of mind, and, frequently, his assumed tranquillity of countenance gave me great uneasiness. He was unwilling to speak on the subject; and I could do no more than attempt, indirectly, to cheer him with hope, avoiding that word, however. . . . All that a friend could say, or offer, or urge, was not enough to heal his many wounds. He listened, and in kindness, or soothed by kindness,

showed tranquillity, but nothing from a friend could relieve him, except on a matter of inferior trouble. He was too thoughtful, or too unquiet, and began to be reckless of his health. Among other proofs of recklessness, he was secretly taking, at times, a few drops of laudanum to keep up his spirits. It was discovered by accident, and without delay revealed to me. He needed not to be warned of the danger of such a habit; but I rejoiced at his promise never to take another drop without my knowledge, for nothing would induce him to break his word when once given,—which was a difficulty. Still, at the very moment of being rejoiced, this was an additional proof of his morbid misery.”

At length, in February, 1820, the progress of the disease proclaimed itself clearly by an attack of bleeding from the lungs. The remaining year of his life was a period of gradual decline, with occasional rallies. With the return of spring his health improved, and he published his last volume, which contained *Lamia*, *Isabella*, *The Eve of St. Agnes*, *Hyperion*, and the *Odes*. Jeffrey reviewed it favourably in the *Edinburgh*; Shelley was much impressed by *Hyperion*. In short, the book, as Keats wrote, “had a good success among the literary people, and I believe has a moderate sale.” But in summer the hemorrhages returned; and, as a last hope, Keats embarked in September for the milder climate of Italy. He was accompanied by his friend, the artist Severn, who nursed him devotedly, but without avail. Keats died in Rome, February 23rd, 1823.

The life of Keats was too short to allow us to form a wholly clear and satisfactory conception either of his character or of his poetic powers. It is not, however, youthfulness merely, that prevents the outlines of these from being clearly perceived. The haziness is due also to a certain breadth and receptiveness of nature. Keats says in one of his letters that men of genius “have not any individuality, any determined character;” and this judgment would inevitably be in part based, consciously or unconsciously, on what he felt with regard to himself. In another letter he discusses the same matter more explicitly: “As to the poetical character itself (I mean that sort, of which, if I am anything, I am a member; that sort distinguished from the Wordsworthian, or egotistical sublime; which is a thing *per se*, and stands alone), it is not itself—it has no self—it is everything and nothing—it has no character—it enjoys light and shade—it lives in gusto, be it foul or fair, high or low, rich or poor, mean or elevated,—it has as much delight in conceiving Iago as Imogen. What shocks the virtuous philosopher delights

the chameleon poet. . . . A poet is the most unpoetical thing in existence, because he has no identity ; he is continually in for, and filling, some other body. The sun, the moon, the sea, and men and women, who are creatures of impulse, are poetical, and have about them an unchangeable attribute ; the poet has none ; no identity. . . . It is a wretched fact to confess, but it is a very fact, that not one word I ever utter can be taken for granted as an opinion growing out of my identical nature. How can it, when I have no nature ? When I am in a room with people, if I ever am free from speculating on creations of my own brain, then, not myself goes home to myself, but the identity of every one in the room begins to press upon me [so] that I am in a very little time annihilated—not only among men ; it would be the same in a nursery of children.” In another letter he says : “ If a sparrow come before my window, I take part in its existence, and pick about the gravel.” All this is doubtless put in an exaggerated way, but it points clearly to the poet’s openness to external impression, to the fact that he found his happiness in mirroring or entering into the external world. He does not impose his own individuality, or thoughts, or feelings upon what he sees, but submits himself to these outer things and tries to realize them. His poetic genius, then, was not only unlike the “ sublime egotism ” of Wordsworth (as he notes), but unlike the genius of Byron or Shelley. Keats’ poetic temperament approximates rather to the objective spirit of Shakespeare or Scott. Yet we look in vain in Keats’ works for those lively images of men and women, for the pictures of the drama of life which we find in the two poets mentioned. This may arise from his youthfulness ; the depicting of human nature requires experience and knowledge of the world, which only come with the lapse of time ; Shakespeare’s earlier plays are markedly inferior to his later in substantiality of characterization, and in knowledge of life. Certainly Keats’ longer poems, *Endymion*, *Lamia*, *Isabella*, *The Eve of St. Agnes*,—although they are stories and representations of the outer world, not of the poet’s own mind—do not give lively representations of human nature. Indeed, in the subjects for his longer poems, he had a tendency towards mythical themes, the adventures of beings,—some of them non-human,—amidst unreal conditions ; so that the events and personages cannot be tried by the standard of human life and human nature. It was not by sympathy with, and interest in, human nature he was attracted to the subjects of his poems, whether human as in the *Eve of St. Agnes*, or supernatural as in *Endymion*, but by another motive altogether—the love of the beautiful.

Knowledge of human nature does not come merely from openness to external impressions and observation, it arises also from reflection and intellectual powers such as are not apt to be much developed in youth. The depicting of character requires insight and the power of generalization, as well as of observation. Hence what Keats' poems depict is the world of which we become cognizant directly through our senses,—the world of sights, and sound, and touches, and tastes. "At the foundation of the character of Keats lay an extraordinary keenness of all the bodily sensibilities and the mental sensibilities which depend upon them. He led, in great part, a life of passive sensation, of pleasure and pain through the senses. . . . He was passionately fond of music, and his sensitiveness to colour, light, and other kinds of visual impression, was preternaturally acute. He possessed, in short, simply in virtue of his organization, a rich intellectual foundation of that kind which consists of notions furnished directly by sensations, and of a corresponding stock of names and terms." (Masson.) Or, as Rossetti says: "He was a man of perception rather than of contemplation or speculation." And so it is that the most conspicuous characteristic of Keats' poetry, as is on all hands admitted, is its marked *sensuousness*, not in any bad sense of that word, but because his poetry reflects, in extraordinary vividness and variety, impressions of the senses.

This openness to, and vividness of, sense impression is a very needful qualification in a poet; but in itself it is not necessarily poetical. In Keats' case, however, these peculiarities went along with an intense feeling and love for the beautiful. This is the second and most distinctive characteristic of Keats' genius. No other poetry in the English language exhibits more fully the sense of beauty and the love of beauty for its own sake. The yearning for the beautiful was the strongest impulse in the poet's life. "I feel assured I should write," he says, "from the mere yearning and fondness I have for the beautiful, even if my night's labours should be burnt every morning, and no eye ever shine upon them." When his life was drawing swiftly to its close he wrote: "If I should die, I have left no immortal work behind me—nothing to make my friends proud of my memory, *but I have loved the principle of beauty in all things*, and if I had had time, I would have made myself remembered." The spirit of man yearns after the infinite, and this passion for beauty in Keats could not be satiated by anything that the senses yielded, to the poet, from the existing world. So that Keats turns from, or rather rises above, actual beauty, to ideal and imaginative beauty. This yearning for ideal beauty gives him his true

poetic impulse. Through his imagination he delighted to escape from the narrow bounds of sense and time into the infinite world of the ideal. "The roaring of the wind," he writes, "is my wife, and the stars through my window-panes are my children; the mighty abstract idea of Beauty in all things, I have, stifles the more divided and minute domestic happiness. . . . I feel more and more every day as my imagination strengthens that I do not live in this world alone, but in a thousand worlds. No sooner am I alone than shapes of epic greatness are stationed around me, and serve my spirit the office which is equivalent to a king's body guard: 'then Tragedy with scepter'd pall comes sweeping by.' According to my state of mind, I am with Achilles shouting in the trenches, or with Theocritus in the vales of Sicily; or throw my whole being into Troilus, and, repeating those lines, 'I wander like a lost soul upon the Stygian bank, staying for waftage. I melt into the air with a voluptuousness so delicate that I am content to be alone.'"

The best-known of his longer poems, *The Eve of St. Agnes*, serves to illustrate these peculiarities of Keats' genius. It tells of two lovers who are divided by belonging to two hostile families—the same situation as is treated in *Romeo and Juliet*; but neither does it tell a story and interest us in the movement of events, as Scott would have done, nor does it attempt to awaken deep sympathy for the persons concerned. It takes the theme of youthful passion, because youthful passion is a beautiful thing; and it selects one *scene* in the story mainly for its pictorial beauty. The time chosen is the middle ages, the period of chivalry; not because Keats had any deep familiarity with, or interest in, that age, nor does he attempt really to picture the time to his readers. He chooses that age because it has elements of beauty and picturesqueness, and because it is remote from poet and reader, and so gives scope to the imagination, leaves it unchecked by any of the imperfection and ugliness always pertaining to the present and actual. The Gothic chapel, the castle, and the other elements taken from the past, serve to give a picturesque background. The plot-interest, the vivacity, and reality which Scott might have imparted to the poem are lacking; but the reader does not feel the lack. The poem charms by its beauty. "Its personages appeal to us, not so much humanly and in themselves, as by the circumstances, scenery, and atmosphere amidst which we see them move." The poem dwells "in great part about the external circumstances and decorative adjuncts of the tale. But in handling these, Keats' method is the reverse of that by which some writers vainly

endeavour to reveal in literature the effects of the painter and sculptor. He never writes for the eye merely, but vivifies everything he touches, telling even of dead and senseless things in terms of life, movement, and feeling." (Colvin.) The power of *The Eve of St. Agnes*, says Rossetti, "lies in the delicate transfusion of sight and emotion into sound; in making pictures out of words, or turning words into pictures; of giving a visionary beauty to the closest items of description; of holding all the materials of the poem in a long-drawn suspense of music and reverie. *The Eve of St. Agnes* is *par excellence* the poem of 'glamour.' It means next to nothing, but it means that little so expressively, and in so rapt a mood of musing and of trance, that it tells as an intellectual no less than a sensuous restorative."

Keats' love of beauty, and sensitiveness to external things, not only determine the matter of his poems, and supply him, in unsurpassed abundance, with exquisite imagery; it influences also form and expression. Cowden Clarke tells us how Keats, even in his boyhood, dwelt fondly on the felicitous phraseology of Spenser. He himself says that he "looks upon fine phrases like a lover." He had an exquisite ear for the music of verse; he valued beauty in detail even to excess as compared with effectiveness on the whole. He is therefore a master of technique,—of the sweet voluptuous flow of musical sounds and exquisite imagery. According to Mr. Swinburne, "the faultless force and profound subtlety of this deep and cunning instinct for the absolute expression of absolute natural beauty is doubtless the one main distinctive gift or power which denotes him as a poet among his equals."

Upon the *form* of subsequent poetry he has had greater influence than any other poet; and through this influence of his, especially as exercised upon, and through, Tennyson, he possesses an importance in the development of English poetry far beyond what his necessarily meagre production would seem to warrant.

BIBLIOGRAPHY.—*Life*—by Lord Houghton (2 vols.), by Prof. Colvin (*Eng. Men of Letters*), by Wm. Rossetti (*Great Writers Series*); a selection from his letters, ed. by Colvin, in one vol. (Macmillan) is very useful for biographical purposes. Works—full critical ed., by Forman (Poetry, 2 vols., Prose, letters, etc., 2 vols.), Forman's text without notes also published in one vol.; an edition by Palgrave (*Golden Treasury Series*). Essays—by M. Arnold (*Ward's English Poets*), by Swinburne (*Ency. Brit.* 9th ed.), by Masson, by Courthope (*Liberal Movement in Eng. Lit.*). A bibliography is appended to *Keats* in *Great Writers Series*.

ON FIRST LOOKING INTO CHAPMAN'S HOMER.

Keats' friend, Charles Cowden Clarke, narrates that the poet and he sat up until daybreak reading Chapman's Homer; and, on the same morning before 10 o'clock, Clarke received from Keats a copy of this sonnet. The date is not fixed; in a MS. copy belonging to Keats' brother Tom, it is dated 1816. It was printed, in December of that year by Hunt, in *The Examiner*, and was one of the pieces included in Keats' first volume, 1817.

Chapman's translation of the *Iliad* was published in 1611,—of the *Odyssey* in 1616. This work had a great reputation in its own day, and, although inaccurate and marred by various eccentricities, has a vivacity and force which has won admiration from some of the best judges.

1. the realms of gold. The literature of beauty and imagination.

5. Oft. One of the MS. copies has "But."

6. That deep brow'd. In the MS. read originally, "Which low brow'd." The latter would refer to the whole forehead; the epithet as it stands in the text refers to the prominent, overhanging arches above the eyes.

7. Cowden Clarke says that this line stood originally:

Yet never could I tell what men could mean,

and that Keats substituted the reading in the text because he considered the reading "bald and too simply wondering." Forman thinks that the change may also have been occasioned by a criticism of Hunt's on the sonnet in its original form—that it contained an incorrect rhyme.

11. eagle. "Wond'ring" stands in the MS.

Cortez (1475-1547), the conqueror of Mexico. It was Balboa who thus saw the Pacific, as is shown by the following passage from Robertson's History of America, which we know Keats read in his later school days, and doubtless had in mind:

"At length the Indians assured them, that from the top of the next mountain they should discover the ocean which was the object of their wishes. When, with infinite toil, they had climbed up the greater part of that steep ascent, Balboa commanded his men to halt, that he might be the first who should enjoy a spectacle which he had so long desired. As soon as he beheld the South Sea stretching in endless prospect below him, he fell on his knees, and lifting up his eyes to heaven, returned thanks to God, who had conducted him to a discovery so beneficial to his country and so honourable to himself. His followers observing his transport of joy, rushed forward to join in his wonder, exultation, and gratitude."

THE TERROR OF DEATH.

This title is invented by Palgrave. The sonnet was not published until 1848; but Keats sends it in a letter to his friend Reynolds dated (in Colvin's edition) Jan. 31st, 1818. As Keats in this letter calls it his "last sonnet," it was probably written not long before; but Forman says there is a manuscript copy of it in Sir Charles Dilke's copy of *Endymion*, dated 1817.

8. **with the magic hand of chance.** The meaning of this expression would seem to be that, under the influence of strong inspiration, the poet seems to himself to write not in accordance with his own will but as it were by chance, although in this case chance produces magical results.

9. **fair creature of an hour.** In the presence of eternity the beauty of woman seems to last but an hour.

ODE TO A NIGHTINGALE.

Published along with *Lamia*, etc., in the vol. of 1820; it had been previously printed (July, 1819) in a magazine, *Annals of the Fine Arts*. It was written in the spring of 1819 in the garden at Hampstead, where a nightingale was accustomed to sing. "Keats," writes his friend and housemate, Brown, "felt a tranquil and continual joy in her song, and one morning he took his chair from the breakfast-table to the grass-plot under a plum tree, where he sat for two or three hours." When he returned to the house he had the ode written on scraps of paper.

This beautiful ode is as characteristic of Keats as are the lines *To a Skylark*, of Shelley; and both should be compared with the stanzas *To the Skylark*, by Wordsworth, which are to be found in the Appendix to the present volume. In the latter, Wordsworth finds in the song of the skylark and the impulses from which it springs, an analogy to his own poetry—a poetry which has its inspiration in common things, and rises to the ideal without forgetting the real earth. In the *Ode to a Nightingale*, as in Shelley's *Skylark*, there is not the note of contentment with the actual which we find in Wordsworth, but of intense yearning for the unattainable. In Shelley's poem, the yearning is for the *secret* which will solve the mystery of the universe and give happiness to mankind.

In Keats' ode the yearning is not for anything so intellectual as the solution of a difficulty; it is for a *sensation*,—the sensation of ideal bliss; and this bliss is for the individual, not for mankind at large. The heavy, perfumed atmosphere, the darkness of evening, the rich music of the nightingale are as in complete unison with Keats' languorous and pleasure-loving mood; as are the bright, bracing morning, the open sky, and the shrill ascending notes of the lark, with Shelley's eager spirit. There are analogous differences in technique: the languid, voluptuous flow of Keats' versification, as compared with the panting, staccato movement of Shelley's stanza; the rich imagery and open vowels of Keats, as compared with the lighter and more ethereal qualities of Shelley's style.

The word *ode* is used very vaguely by English poets. Prof. Gosse in his collection of odes defines it as "any strain of enthusiastic and exalted lyrical verse, directed to a fixed purpose, and dealing progressively with a dignified theme." General as this is, it would exclude some poems which have been called odes. But Mr. Gosse correctly indicates that a reader looks in an ode for a certain dignity and enthusiasm, for development in feeling and thought—a beginning, middle and end—and, of course, for unity. The present ode answers to the definition.

2. **hemlock.** A poisonous plant which produces death by paralysis. It was commonly employed by the Greeks in the case of persons legally condemned to death, *e.g.* Socrates.

4. **Lethe-wards.** Lethe, according to the Greeks, was a river of the lower world from which the shades drank, and thus obtained forgetfulness of the past.

7. **Dryad.** According to the Greeks, each tree had its divinity or spirit, and these were called *Dryads*.

13. **Flora,** the goddess of flowers,—here used for flowers themselves.

14. **Provençal song.** Lyric poetry in the middle ages flourished particularly in southern France, and was written in the dialect of Provence; the poets were known as *troubadours*, and their poems treated largely of love

16. **the true, the blushful.** Originally stood "the true and blushful."

Hippocrene. A fountain on Mount Helicon in Boeotia, sacred to the *Muses*, and supposed to have been produced by the foot of Pegasus striking the ground.

17. **winking** refers to the effect produced by the bursting of the tiny bubbles.

20. **away**. This word is lacking in a MS. copy of the poem in Sir Charles Dilkes' collection, and also in the ode as printed in the *Annals of the Fine Arts*; it also makes the line irregular—an Alexandrine instead of a pentameter. But the irregularity, in quite the manner of Keats, exists in the volume of 1820, and finally, as Forman says, "the perfection thus lent to the echo opening the next stanza exceeds a thousand times in value the regularity got by dropping the word; and that one line with its lingering motive has ample reason to be longer than any other in the poem."

26. This line "very clearly bears out Haydon's words connecting the sadness of the poem with the death of Tom Keats." (Forman.)

30. **to-morrow**. Used poetically to indicate a very short period.

32. Under the influence of a finer inspiration than that of Bacchus, the god of wine.

33. **viewless**. *Invisible*; so *Meas. for Meas.* iii., 1, 124: "To be imprison'd in the viewless winds."

43. **embalméd**. Not in its ordinary meaning, but *full of balms*, or *perfumes*; so Milton, in *Par. Lost*: "With fresh dews embalmed the earth"; Scott, *Lady of the Lake*: "Eglantine embalm'd the air."

46. **pastoral eglantine**. Eglantine is properly the sweet-briar, though popularly applied to various varieties of the wild rose. "Pastoral" presumably because often referred to in pastoral poetry, as in Milton's *L'Allegro*:

bid good morrow
Through the sweet-briar or the vine
Or the twisted eglantine.

In his note on this passage from Milton, Masson says: "The sound of the word, as well as the associations with it, has made it a favourite with English poets from Chaucer downwards." The present writer has failed to find it in Chaucer, but "Eglantine" appears in Spenser's xxvi. sonnet, in *Cymbeline* iv., 2, 223, *Mid. N. Dream*, 2, 1, 252, etc.

49. **The coming musk-rose**. "Mid-May" has not yet arrived, and the musk-rose is not yet fully in bloom.

dewy-wine. *I.e.*, wine of dew. As printed in the *Annals* the line reads "sweetest wine."

51. **Darkling.** *In the dark*; cf. Milton, *Par. Lost*, 3, 39:

As the wakeful bird
Sits darkling, and in shadiest covert hid
Tunes her nocturnal note.

54. **muséd rhyme.** Rhyme which was the result of prolonged musing.

57. **forth.** The *Annals* read “thus.”

60. The *Annals* read:

For thy high requiem become a sod.

requiem. A hymn sung for the repose of the dead.

67. **alien corn.** Alien because Ruth was not an Israelite. “And Ruth the Moabitess said unto Naomi, Let me now go to the field, and glean ears of corn after him in whose sight I shall find grace. And she said unto her, Go, my daughter. And she went and came, and gleaned in the field after the reapers.” (*Ruth*, ii., 2.)

70. **faery.** So in ed. of 1820, but “fairy” in the *Annals*; see note on *The Cuckoo*, l. 31 (p. 171).

ODE TO AUTUMN.

“This poem seems to have been just composed when Keats wrote to Reynolds from Winchester his letter of the 22nd of September, 1819. He says, ‘How beautiful the season is now. How fine the air—a temperate sharpness about it. Really, without joking, chaste weather—Dian skies. I never liked stubble-fields so much as now—aye, better than the chilly green of the Spring. Somehow a stubble plain looks warm, in the same way that some pictures look warm. This struck me so much in my Sunday’s walk that I composed upon it.’” (Forman’s note.)

This poem exemplifies Keats’ familiarity with nature in all its details, and his happy power of seizing upon characteristic beauties (See especially the first and third stanzas). The second stanza is an admirable illustration of that gift which he shares with the Greeks “for personifying the powers of nature in clearly defined imaginary shapes, endowed with human beauty and half-human faculties.” Note how pictorial is this second stanza, and yet how the poet avoids the mistake of

attempting to give us the details that would be seen in an actual picture, while by two or three happy touches he summons magically before the eyes three different images of Autumn.

A MS. of this poem exists with several rejected readings ; the chief are here given. Line 4, "The vines with fruit" ; l. 6, "sweetness" for "ripeness" ; l. 8, "white" for "sweet."

16, fol.

While bright the sun slants through the husky barn,
Or sound asleep in a half reaped field,
Dozed with red poppies, while thy reaping hook
Spares from some slumbrous minutes while warm slumbers creep.

25-26.

While a gold cloud gilds the soft dying day,
Touching the nibble-plains, etc.

28. river-sallows. "Sallow" = willow.

31. "Again full soft" for "with treble soft."

THE HUMAN SEASONS.

First printed in Hunt's annual, *The Literary Pocket Book*, for 1819. The sonnet occurs in a letter to his friend Bailey, dated in the published correspondence, Teignmouth, Sept. 1818 ; but the date is a conjecture of the editor and uncertain.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

SELECTIONS FOR "SIGHT" READING.

AN OLD BALLAD.*

It was a' for our rightful king
That we left fair Scotland's strand ;
It was a' for our rightful king
That we e'er saw Irish land,
My dear, 5
That we e'er saw Irish land.

Now all is done that man can do,
And all is done in vain !
My love ! my native land, adieu !
For I must cross the main, 10
My dear,
For I must cross the main.

He turn'd him round and right about,
All on the Irish shore,
He gave his bridle-reins a shake, 15
With, Adieu for evermore,
My dear !
Adieu for evermore !

The soldier frae the war returns,
And the merchant frae the main, 20
But I hae parted wi' my love,
And ne'er to meet again,
My dear,
And ne'er to meet again.

* See note on p. 192.

When day is gone and night is come,	25
And a' are boun' to sleep,	
I think on them that's far awa	
The lee-lang night, and weep,	
My dear,	
The lee-lang night, and weep.	30

THE SUN UPON THE WEIRDLAW HILL.

The sun upon the Weirdlaw Hill,	
In Ettrick's vale, is sinking sweet ;	
The westland wind is hush and still,	
The lake lies sleeping at my feet.	
Yet not the landscape to mine eye	5
Bears those bright hues that once it bore ;	
Though evening, with her richest dye,	
Flames o'er the hills of Ettrick's shore.	
With listless look along the plain,	
I see Tweed's silver current glide,	10
And coldly mark the holy fane	
Of Melrose rise in ruin'd pride.	
The quiet lake, the balmy air,	
The hill, the stream, the tower, the tree ;—	
Are they still such as once they were,	15
Or is the dreary change in me ?	
Alas, the warp'd and broken board,	
How can it bear the painter's dye !	
The harp of strain'd and tuneless chord,	
How to the minstrel's skill reply !	20
To aching eyes each landscape lowers,	
To feverish pulse each gale blows chill ;	
And Araby's or Eden's bowers	
Were barren as this moorland hill.	

—*Scott.*

FROM SCOTT'S EPISTLE TO ERSKINE.

(Introduction to Marmion, Canto III.)

Like April morning clouds that pass,
 With varying shadow, o'er the grass,
 And imitate, on field and furrow,
 Life's chequer'd scene of joy and sorrow ;
 Like streamlet of the mountain north, 5
 Now in a torrent racing forth,
 Now winding slow its silver train,
 And almost slumbering on the plain ;
 Like breezes of the Autumn day,
 Whose voice inconstant dies away, 10
 And ever swells again as fast,
 When the ear deems its murmur past ;
 Thus various, my romantic theme
 Flits, winds, or sinks, a morning dream.
 Yet pleased, our eye pursues the trace 15
 Of Light and Shade's inconstant race ;
 Pleased, views the rivulet afar,
 Weaving its maze irregular ;
 And pleased, we listen as the breeze
 Heaves its wild sigh through Autumn trees : 20
 Then, wild as cloud, or stream, or gale,
 Flow on, flow unconfined, my Tale !

Need I to thee, dear Erskine, tell
 I love the license all too well,
 In sounds now lowly, and now strong, 25
 To raise the desultory song ?—
 Oft, when 'mid such capricious chime,
 Some transient fit of lofty rhyme
 To thy kind judgment seem'd excuse
 For many an error of the muse, 30
 Oft hast thou said, " If, still mis-spent,
 Thine hours to poetry are lent,
 Go, and to tame thy wandering course,
 Quaff from the fountain at the source ;
 Approach those masters, o'er whose tomb 35
 Immortal laurels ever bloom :

Instructive of the feeble bard, Still from the grave their voice is heard ; From them, and from the paths they show'd, Choose honour'd guide and practised road :	40
Nor ramble on through brake and maze, With harpers rude, of barbarous days.	
In task more meet for mightiest powers, Wouldst thou engage my thriftless hours. But say, my Erskine, hast thou weigh'd That secret power by all obey'd,	45
Which warps not less the passive mind, Its source conceal'd, or undefined ; Whether an impulse, that has birth Soon as the infant wakes on earth,	50
One with our feelings and our powers, And rather part of us than ours ; Or whether fitlier term'd the sway Of habit form'd in early day ?	
Howe'er derived, its force confest Rules with despotic sway the breast, And drags us on by viewless chain, While taste and reason plead in vain.	55
Look east, and ask the Belgian why, Beneath Batavia's sultry sky,	60
He seeks not eager to inhale The freshness of the mountain gale, Content to rear his whitened wall Beside the dank and dull canal ?	
He'll say, from youth he loved to see The white sail gliding by the tree. Or see yon weather-beaten hind, Whose sluggish herds before him wind,	65
Whose tatter'd plaid and rugged cheek His northern clime and kindred speak ; Through England's laughing meads he goes, And England's wealth around him flows ;	70
Ask, if it would content him well, At ease in those gay plains to dwell, Where hedge-rows spread a verdant screen,	75
And spires and forests intervene,	

And the neat cottage peeps between ?
No ! not for these would he exchange
His dark Lochaber's boundless range :
Not for fair Devon's meads forsake 80
Bennevis grey, and Garry's lake.

Thus while I ape the measure wild
Of tales that charm'd me yet a child,
Rude though they be, still with the chime
Return the thoughts of early time ; 85
And feelings, roused in life's first day,
Glow in the line, and prompt the lay.
Then rise those crags, that mountain tower
Which charm'd my fancy's wakening hour.
Though no broad river swept along, 90
To claim, perchance, heroic song ;
Though sigh'd no groves in summer gale,
To prompt of love a softer tale ;
Though scarce a puny streamlet's speed
Claim'd homage from a shepherd's reed ; 95
Yet was poetic impulse given,
By the green hill and clear blue heaven.
It was a barren scene, and wild,
Where naked cliffs were rudely piled ;
But ever and anon between 100
Lay velvet tufts of loveliest green ;
And well the lonely infant knew
Recesses where the wall-flower grew,
And honeysuckle loved to crawl
Up the low crag and ruin'd wall. 105
I deem'd such nooks the sweetest shade
The sun in all its round survey'd ;
And still I thought that shatter'd tower
The mightiest work of human power ;
And marvell'd as the aged hind 110
With some strange tale bewitch'd my mind,
Of forayers, who, with headlong force,
Down from that strength had spurr'd their horse,
Their southern rapine to renew,
Far in the distant Cheviots blue, 115
And, home returning, fill'd the hall

With revel, wassel-rout, and brawl.
 Methought that still, with trump and clang,
 The gateway's broken arches rang ;
 Methought grim features, seam'd with scars, 120
 Glared through the window's rusty bars,
 And ever, by the winter hearth,
 Old tales I heard of woe or mirth,
 Of lovers' slights, of ladies' charms,
 Of witches' spells, of warriors' arms ; 125
 Of patriot battles, won of old
 By Wallace wight and Bruce the bold ;
 Of later fields of feud and fight,
 When, pouring from their Highland height,
 The Scottish clans, in headlong sway, 130
 Had swept the scarlet ranks away.
 While stretch'd at length upon the floor,
 Again I fought each combat o'er,
 Pebbles and shells, in order laid,
 The mimic ranks of war display'd ; 135
 And onward still the Scottish Lion bore,
 And still the scatter'd Southron fled before.
 Still, with vain fondness, could I trace,
 Anew, each kind familiar face,
 That brighten'd at our evening fire ! 140
 From the thatch'd mansion's grey-hair'd Sire,
 Wise without learning, plain and good,
 And sprung of Scotland's gentler blood ;
 Whose eye, in age, quick, clear, and keen,
 Show'd what in youth its glance had been ; 145
 Whose doom discording neighbours sought,
 Content with equity unbought ;
 To him the venerable Priest,
 Our frequent and familiar guest,
 Whose life and manners well could paint 150
 Alike the student and the saint ;
 Alas ! whose speech too oft I broke
 With gambol rude and timeless joke :
 For I was wayward, bold, and wilful,
 A self-will'd imp, a grandame's child ; 155
 But half a plague, and half a jest,
 Was still endured, beloved, caress'd.

For me, thus nurtured, dost thou ask
 The classic poet's well-conn'd task ?
 Nay, Erskine, nay—On the wild hill 160
 Let the wild heath-bell flourish still ;
 Cherish the tulip, prune the vine,
 But freely let the woodbine twine,
 And leave untrimm'd the eglantine.

TO ALTHEA FROM PRISON.

When Love with unconfined wings
 Hovers within my gates,
 And my divine Althea brings
 To whisper at the grates ;
 When I lie tangled in her hair 5
 And fetter'd to her eye,
 The birds that wanton in the air
 Know no such liberty.

When flowing cups run swiftly round
 With no allaying Thames, 10
 Our careless heads with roses crown'd
 Our hearts with loyal flames ;
 When thirsty grief in wine we steep,
 When healths and draughts go free—
 Fishes that tippie in the deep 15
 Know no such liberty.

When, linnet-like confined, I
 With shriller throat shall sing
 The sweetness, mercy, majesty
 And glories of my King ; 20
 When I shall voice aloud how good
 He is, how great should be,
 Enlargéd winds, that curl the flood,
 Know no such liberty.

Stone walls do not a prison make, 25
 Nor iron bars a cage ;
 Minds innocent and quiet take
 That for an hermitage :

If I have freedom in my love
 And in my soul am free,
 Angels alone, that soar above,
 Enjoy such liberty.

30

—*Lovelace (1618-1658).*

FROM POPE'S ESSAY ON MAN.

Heav'n from all creatures hides the book of fate,
 All but the page prescrib'd, their present state :
 From brutes what men, from men what spirits know :
 Or who could suffer being here below ?
 The lamb thy riot dooms to bleed to-day, 5
 Had he thy reason, would he skip and play ?
 Pleas'd to the last, he crops the flow'ry food,
 And licks the hand just raised to shed his blood.
 Oh blindness to the future ! kindly giv'n,
 That each may fill the circle mark'd by Heav'n : 10
 Who sees with equal eye, as God of all,
 A hero perish, or a sparrow fall,
 Atoms or systems into ruin hurl'd,
 And now a bubble burst, and now a world.
 Hope humbly then ; with trembling pinions soar ; 15
 Wait the great teacher death, and God adore.
 What future bliss, he gives not thee to know,
 But gives that hope to be thy blessing now.
 Hope springs eternal in the human breast :
 Man never is, but always *to be* blest : 20
 The soul, uneasy and confin'd from home,
 Rests and expatiates in a life to come.
 Lo, the poor Indian ! whose untutor'd mind
 Sees God in clouds, or hears him in the wind ;
 His soul proud science never taught to stray 25
 Far as the solar walk, or milky way ;
 Yet simple nature to his hope has giv'n,
 Behind the cloud-topt hill, an humbler heav'n ;
 Some safer world in depth of woods embrac'd,
 Some happier island in the wat'ry waste, 30
 Where slaves once more their native land behold,

No fiends torment, no Christians thirst for gold.
 To Be, contents his natural desire,
 He asks no angel's wing, no seraph's fire ;
 But thinks, admitted to that equal sky, 35
 His faithful dog shall bear him company.

Go, wiser thou ! and in thy scale of sense,
 Weigh thy opinion against Providence ;
 Call imperfection what thou fancy'st such,
 Say, Here he gives too little, there too much : 40
 Destroy all creatures for thy sport or gust,
 Yet cry, If man's unhappy, God's unjust ;
 If man alone ingross not Heav'n's high care,
 Alone made perfect here, immortal there :
 Snatch from his hand the balance and the rod, 45
 Re-judge his justice, be the god of God.
 In pride, in reas'ning pride, our error lies ;
 All quit their sphere, and rush into the skies.
 Pride still is aiming at the blest abodes,
 Men would be angels, angels would be gods. 50
 Aspiring to be gods, if angels fell,
 Aspiring to be angels, men rebel :
 And who but wishes to invert the laws
 Of order, sins against th' Eternal Cause.

All are but parts of one stupendous whole, 55
 Whose body nature is, and God the soul ;
 That, chang'd thro' all, and yet in all the same,
 Great in the earth, as in th' ethereal frame,
 Warms in the sun, refreshes in the breeze,
 Glows in the stars, and blossoms in the trees, 60
 Lives thro' all life, extends thro' all extent,
 Spreads undivided, operates unspent ;
 Breathes in our soul, informs our mortal part,
 As full, as perfect, in a hair as heart ;
 As full, as perfect, in vile man that mourns, 65
 As the rapt seraph that adores and burns :
 To him no high, no low, no great, no small ;
 He fills, he bounds, connects, and equals all.

Cease then, nor order imperfection name :
 Our proper bliss depends on what we blame. 70
 Know thy own point : this kind, this due degree

Of blindness, weakness; Heav'n bestows on thee.
 Submit. In this, or any other sphere,
 Secure to be as blest as thou canst bear :
 Safe in the hand of one disposing Pow'r 75
 Or in the natal, or the mortal hour.
 All nature is but art unknown to thee ;
 All chance, direction which thou canst not see ;
 All discord, harmony not understood ;
 All partial evil, universal good ; 80
 And, spite of pride, in erring reason's spite,
 One truth is clear, ' Whatever is, is right.'

ODE ON A DISTANT PROSPECT OF ETON COLLEGE.

Ye distant spires, ye antique towers
 That crown the wat'ry glade,
 Where grateful Science still adores
 Her Henry's holy shade ;
 And ye, that from the stately brow 5
 Of Windsor's heights th' expanse below
 Of grove, of lawn, of mead survey,
 Whose turf, whose shade, whose flowers among
 Wanders the hoary Thames along
 His silver-winding way : 10

Ah happy hills ! ah pleasing shade !
 Ah fields beloved in vain !
 Where once my careless childhood stray'd,
 A stranger yet to pain !
 I feel the gales that from ye blow 15
 A momentary bliss bestow,
 As waving fresh their gladsome wing
 My weary soul they seem to soothe,
 And, redolent of joy and youth,
 To breathe a second spring. 20

Say, Father Thames, for thou hast seen
 Full many a sprightly race
 Disporting on thy margin green
 The paths of pleasure trace ;

Who foremost now delight to cleave 25
 With pliant arm, thy glassy wave ?
 The captive linnet which enthrall ?
 What idle progeny succeed
 To chase the rolling circle's speed
 Or urge the flying ball ? 30

While some on earnest business bent
 Their murmuring labours ply
 'Gainst graver hours, that bring constraint
 To sweeten liberty :
 Some bold adventurers disdain 35
 The limits of their little reign
 And unknown regions dare descry :
 Still as they run they look behind,
 They hear a voice in every wind
 And snatch a fearful joy. 40

Gay hope is theirs by fancy fed,
 Less pleasing when possess'd ;
 The tear forgot as soon as shed,
 The sunshine of the breast :
 Theirs buxom health, of rosy hue, 45
 Wild wit, invention ever new,
 And lively cheer, of vigour born ;
 The thoughtless day, the easy night,
 The spirits pure, the slumbers light
 That fly th' approach of morn. 50

Alas ! regardless of their doom
 The little victims play !
 No sense have they of ills to come
 Nor care beyond to-day :
 Yet see how all around 'em wait 55
 The ministers of human fate
 And black Misfortune's baleful train !
 Ah shew them where in ambush stand
 To seize their prey, the murderous band !
 Ah, tell them they are men ! 60

These shall the fury Passions tear,
 The vultures of the mind,

- Disdainful Anger, pallid Fear,
 And Shame that sculks behind ;
 Or pining Love shall waste their youth, 65
 Or Jealousy with rankling tooth
 That inly gnaws the secret heart,
 And Envy wan, and faded Care,
 Grim-visaged comfortless Despair,
 And Sorrow's piercing dart. 70
- Ambition this shall tempt to rise,
 Then whirl the wretch from high
 To bitter Scorn a sacrifice
 And grinning Infamy. 75
 The stings of Falsehood those shall try,
 And hard Unkindness' alter'd eye,
 That mocks the tear it forced to flow ;
 And keen Remorse with blood defiled,
 And moody Madness laughing wild
 Amid severest woe. 80
- Lo, in the Vale of Years beneath
 A griesly troop are seen,
 The painful family of Death,
 More hideous than their Queen :
 This racks the joints, this fires the veins, 85
 That every labouring sinew strains,
 Those in the deeper vitals rage :
 Lo, Poverty, to fill the band,
 That numbs the soul with icy hand,
 And slow-consuming Age. 90
- To each his sufferings : all are men,
 Condemn'd alike to groan ;
 The tender for another's pain,
 Th' unfeeling for his own.
 Yet, ah ! why should they know their fate, 95
 Since sorrow never comes too late,
 And happiness too swiftly flies ?
 Thought would destroy their paradise !
 No more ;—where ignorance is bliss,
 'Tis folly to be wise. 100

—T. Gray.

ODE TO DUTY.

Stern Daughter of the voice of God !
 O Duty ! if that name thou love
 Who art a light to guide, a rod
 To check the erring, and reprove ;
 Thou who art victory and law 5
 When empty terrors overawe ;
 From vain temptations dost set free,
 And calm'st the weary strife of frail humanity !

There are who ask not if thine eye
 Be on them ; who, in love and truth 10
 Where no misgiving is, rely
 Upon the genial sense of youth :
 Glad hearts ! without reproach or blot,
 Who do thy work, and know it not :
 O ! if through confidence misplaced 15
 They fail, thy saving arms, dread Power ! around them cast.

Serene will be our days and bright
 And happy will our nature be
 When love is an unerring light,
 And joy its own security. 20
 And they a blissful course may hold
 Ev'n now who, not unwisely bold,
 Live in the spirit of this creed ;
 Yet find that other strength, according to their need.

I, loving freedom, and untried, 25
 No sport of every random gust,
 Yet being to myself a guide,
 Too blindly have reposed my trust :
 And oft, when in my heart was heard
 Thy timely mandate, I deferr'd 30
 The task, in smoother walks to stray ;
 But thee I now would serve more strictly, if I may.

Through no disturbance of my soul
 Or strong compunction in me wrought,
 I supplicate for thy controul, 35
 But in the quietness of thought :

Me this uncharter'd freedom tires ;
 I feel the weight of chance desires :
 My hopes no more must change their name ;
 I long for a repose which ever is the same. 40

Stern lawgiver ! yet thou dost wear
 The Godhead's most benignant grace ;
 Nor know we anything so fair
 As is the smile upon thy face :
 Flowers laugh before thee on their beds, 45
 And fragrance in thy footing treads ;
 Thou dost preserve the Stars from wrong ;
 And the most ancient Heavens, through thee, are fresh and strong.

To humbler functions, awful Power !
 I call thee : I myself commend 50
 Unto thy guidance from this hour ;
 O let my weakness have an end !
 Give unto me, made lowly wise,
 The spirit of self-sacrifice ;
 The confidence of reason give ; 55
 And in the light of Truth thy bondman let me live.

— *W. Wordsworth.*

TO THE SKYLARK.

Ethereal minstrel ! pilgrim of the sky !
 Dost thou despise the earth where cares abound ?
 Or while the wings aspire, are heart and eye
 Both with thy nest upon the dewy ground ?
 Thy nest which thou canst drop into at will, 5
 Those quivering wings composed, that music still !

To the last point of vision, and beyond
 Mount, daring warbler !—that love-prompted strain
 —'Twixt thee and thine a never-failing bond—
 Thrills not the less the bosom of the plain : 10
 Yet might'st thou seem, proud privilege ! to sing
 All independent of the leafy Spring.

Leave to the nightingale her shady wood ;
 A privacy of glorious light is thine,
 Whence thou dost pour upon the world a flood 15
 Of harmony, with instinct more divine ;
 Type of the wise, who soar, but never roam—
 True to the kindred points of Heaven and Home !

—*W. Wordsworth.*

SONG FROM "JAMES LEE."

I.

Oh, good gigantic smile o' the brown old earth,
 This autumn morning ! How he sets his bones
 To bask i' the sun, and thrusts out knees and feet
 For the ripple to run over in its mirth ;
 Listening the while, where on the heap of stones 5
 The white breast of the sea-lark twitters sweet.

II.

That is the doctrine, simple, ancient, true ;
 Such is life's trial, as old earth smiles and knows.
 If you loved only what were worth your love,
 Love were clear gain, and wholly well for you. 10
 Make the low nature better by your throes !
 Give earth yourself, go up for gain above !

—*Robert Browning.*

THE LOST LEADER.

I.

Just for a handful of silver he left us,
 Just for a riband to stick in his coat—
 Found the one gift of which fortune bereft us,
 Lost all the others, she lets us devote ;
 They, with the gold to give, doled him out silver, 5
 So much was theirs who so little allowed :
 How all our copper had gone for his service !
 Rags—were they purple, his heart had been proud !

We that had loved him so, followed him, honoured him,
 Lived in his mild and magnificent eye, 10
 Learned his great language, caught his clear accents,
 Made him our pattern to live and to die !
 Shakespeare was of us, Milton was for us,
 Burns, Shelley, were with us,—they watch from their graves !
 He alone breaks from the van and the freemen, 15
 He alone sinks to the rear and the slaves !

II.

We shall march prospering,—not thro' his presence ;
 Songs may inspirit us,—not from his lyre ;
 Deeds will be done,—while he boasts his quiescence,
 Still bidding crouch whom the rest bade aspire. 20
 Blot out his name, then, record one lost soul more,
 One task more declined, one more footpath untrod,
 One more devil's-triumph and sorrow for angels,
 One wrong more to man, one more insult to God !
 Life's night begins : let him never come back to us ! 25
 There would be doubt, hesitation and pain,
 Forced praise on our part—the glimmer of twilight,
 Never glad confident morning again !
 Best fight on well, for we taught him—strike gallantly,
 Menace our heart ere we master his own ; 30
 Then let him receive the new knowledge and wait us,
 Pardoned in heaven, the first by the throne !

—Robert Browning.

SHELLEY.

He saw alone the star that lured him on,
 And with his rapt eyes turned from earthly ways,
 He followed where that astral wanderer shone,
 Illumined, yet illusioned, by its rays.

Blame not his errant feet, that idly fell 5
 On more than one poor flower in passing by :
 Enough to know those wandering feet as well
 Smote stone and flower alike unconsciously ;—

Enough that we, who dream amid the dust,
Were wakened by his momentary flight, 10
When down our calmer ways was blown a gust
Of song that woke reverberating Night.

Ah ! happier treaders of earth's lower ways,
Who pace smooth paths with less impetuous beat ;
Since he would climb where ye can only gaze, 15
One moment pity his impatient feet !

—A. J. Stringer.

FROM "PARTING."

Forgive me ! forgive me !
Ah, Marguerite, fain
Would these arms reach to clasp thee !
But see ! 'tis in vain.

In the void air, toward thee, 5
My stretch'd arms are cast ;
But a sea rolls between us—
Our different past !

Far, far from each other
Our spirits have grown. 10
And what heart knows another ?
Ah ! who knows his own ?

Blow ye winds ! lift me with you !
I come to the wild ;
Fold closely, O Nature ! 15
Thine arms round thy child.

To thee only God granted
A heart ever new—
To all always open,
To all always true. 20

Ah calm me ! restore me !
And dry up my tears
On thy high mountain-platforms
Where morn first appears.

Where the white mists, forever,
 Are spread and upfurl'd ;
 In the stir of the forces
 Whence issued the world.

25

—*M. Arnold.*

ABSENCE.

In this fair stranger's eyes of grey
 Thine eyes, my love ! I see.
 I shiver ; for the passing day
 Had borne me far from thee.

5

This is the curse of life ! that not
 A nobler, calmer train
 Of wiser thoughts and feelings blot
 Our passions from our brain ;

10

But each day brings its petty dust
 Our soon-choked souls to fill ;
 And we forget because we must,
 And not because we will.

15

I struggle towards the light ; and ye,
 Once-long'd-for storms of love !
 If with the light ye cannot be,
 I bear that ye remove.

20

I struggle towards the light—but oh,
 While yet the night is chill,
 Upon time's barren, stormy flow,
 Stay with me, Marguerite, still !

—*M. Arnold.*

A CHRISTMAS CAROL.

“What means this glory round our feet,”
 The Magi mused, “more bright than morn ?”
 And voices chanted clear and sweet,
 “To-day the Prince of Peace is born.

“What means that star,” the Shepherds said, 5
 “That brightens through the rocky glen?”
 And angels, answering overhead,
 Sang, “Peace on earth, good-will to men!”

’T is eighteen hundred years and more
 Since those sweet oracles were dumb; 10
 We wait for Him, like them of yore;
 Alas, He seems so slow to come!

But it was said, in words of gold
 No time or sorrow e’er shall dim,
 That little children might be bold 15
 In perfect trust to come to Him.

All round about our feet shall shine
 A light like that the wise men saw,
 If we our living wills incline
 To that sweet Life which is the Law. 20

So shall we learn to understand
 The simple faith of shepherds then,
 And, clasping kindly hand in hand,
 Sing, “Peace on earth, good-will to men!”

And they who do their souls no wrong, 25
 But keep at eve the faith of morn
 Shall daily hear the angel song,
 “To-day the Prince of Peace is born!”

—*Lowell.*

SONNET XXIX.

When in disgrace with fortune and men’s eyes
 I all alone beweepe my outcast state,
 And trouble deaf heaven with my bootless cries,
 And look upon myself, and curse my fate;

Wishing me like to one more rich in hope, 5
 Featured like him, like him with friends possess,
 Desiring this man’s art, and that man’s scope,
 With what I most enjoy contented least;

Yet in these thoughts myself almost despising,
 Haply I think on Thee—and then my state, 10
 Like to the lark at break of day arising
 From sullen earth, sings hymns at heaven's gate ;
 For thy sweet love remember'd, such wealth brings
 That then I scorn to change my state with kings.
 — *W. Shakespeare.*

SONNET CIV.

To me, fair Friend, you never can be old,
 For as you were when first your eye I eyed
 Such seems your beauty still. Three winters cold
 Have from the forests shook three summers' pride ;
 Three beauteous springs to yellow autumn turn'd 5
 In process of the season have I seen,
 Three April perfumes in three hot Junes burn'd,
 Since first I saw you fresh which yet are green.
 Ah ! yet doth beauty, like a dial hand,
 Steal from his figure, and no pace perceived ; 10
 So your sweet hue, which methinks still doth stand,
 Hath motion, and mine eye may be deceived :
 For fear of which, hear this, thou age unbred,—
 Ere you were born, was beauty's summer dead.
 — *W. Shakespeare.*

AFTER-THOUGHT.

I thought of thee, my partner and my guide,
 As being past away. — Vain sympathies !
 For, backward, Duddon ! as I cast my eyes,
 I see what was, and is, and will abide ;
 Still glides the stream and shall for ever glide ; 5
 The Form remains, the Function never dies ;
 While we the brave, the mighty, and the wise,
 We men, who in our morn of youth defied
 The elements, must vanish ;—be it so !

Enough, if something from our hands have power 10
 To live, and act, and serve the future hour ;
 And if, as toward the silent land we go,
 Through love, through hope, and faith's transcendent dower,
 We feel that we are greater than we know.

—*W. Wordsworth.*

TO NIGHT.

Mysterious Night ! when our first parent knew
 Thee from report divine, and heard thy name,
 Did he not tremble for this lovely frame,
 This glorious canopy of light and blue ?
 Yet 'neath a curtain of translucent dew, 5
 Bathed in the rays of the great setting flame,
 Hesperus with the host of heaven came,
 And lo ! Creation widened in man's view.

Who could have thought such darkness lay concealed
 Within thy beams, O Sun ! or who could find, 10
 Whilst flow'r, and leaf, and insect stood revealed,
 That to such countless orbs thou mad'st us blind !
 Why do we then shun Death with anxious strife ?
 If Light can thus deceive, wherefore not Life ?

—*J. Blanco White.*

SONNET.

When acorns fall, and swallows troop for flight,
 And hope matured slow mellows to regret,
 And Autumn, pressed by Winter for his debt,
 Drops leaf on leaf till she be beggared quite ;
 Should then the crescent moon's unselfish light 5
 Gleam up the sky just as the sun doth set,
 Her brightening gaze, though day and dark have met,
 Prolongs the gloaming and retards the night.
 So, fair young life, new risen upon mine
 Just as it owns the edict of decay 10
 And Fancy's fires should pale and pass away,
 My menaced glory takes a glow from thine,
 And, in the deepening sundown of my day,
 Thou with thy dawn delayest my decline. —*A. Austin.*

THE CHOICE.

Think thou and act ; to-morrow thou shalt die.

Outstretched in the sun's warmth upon the shore,

Thou say'st : " Man's measured path is all gone o'er :

Up all his years, steeply, with strain and sigh,

Man clomb until he touched the truth ; and I,

Even I, am he whom it was destined for."

5

How should this be ! Art thou then so much more
Than they who sowed, that thou shouldst reap thereby ?

Nay, come up hither. From this wave-washed mound

Unto the furthest flood-brim look with me ;

10

Then reach on with thy thought till it be drown'd.

Miles and miles distant though the last line be,

And though thy soul sail leagues and leagues beyond,—

Still, leagues beyond those leagues, there is more sea.

—D. G. Rossetti.

IMMORTALITY.

Foild by our fellow men, depress'd, outworn,

We leave the brutal world to take its way,

And, *Patience ! in another life*, we say,

The world shall be thrust down, and we up-borne !

And will not, then, the immortal armies scorn

5

The world's poor rooted leavings ? or will they,

Who fail'd under the heat of this life's day,

Support the fervours of the heavenly morn ?

No, no ! the energy of life may be

Kept on after the grave, but not begun !

10

And he who flagg'd not in the earthly strife,

From strength to strength advancing—only he,

His soul well-knit, and all his battles won,

Mounts, and that hardly, to eternal life.

—M. Arnold.

